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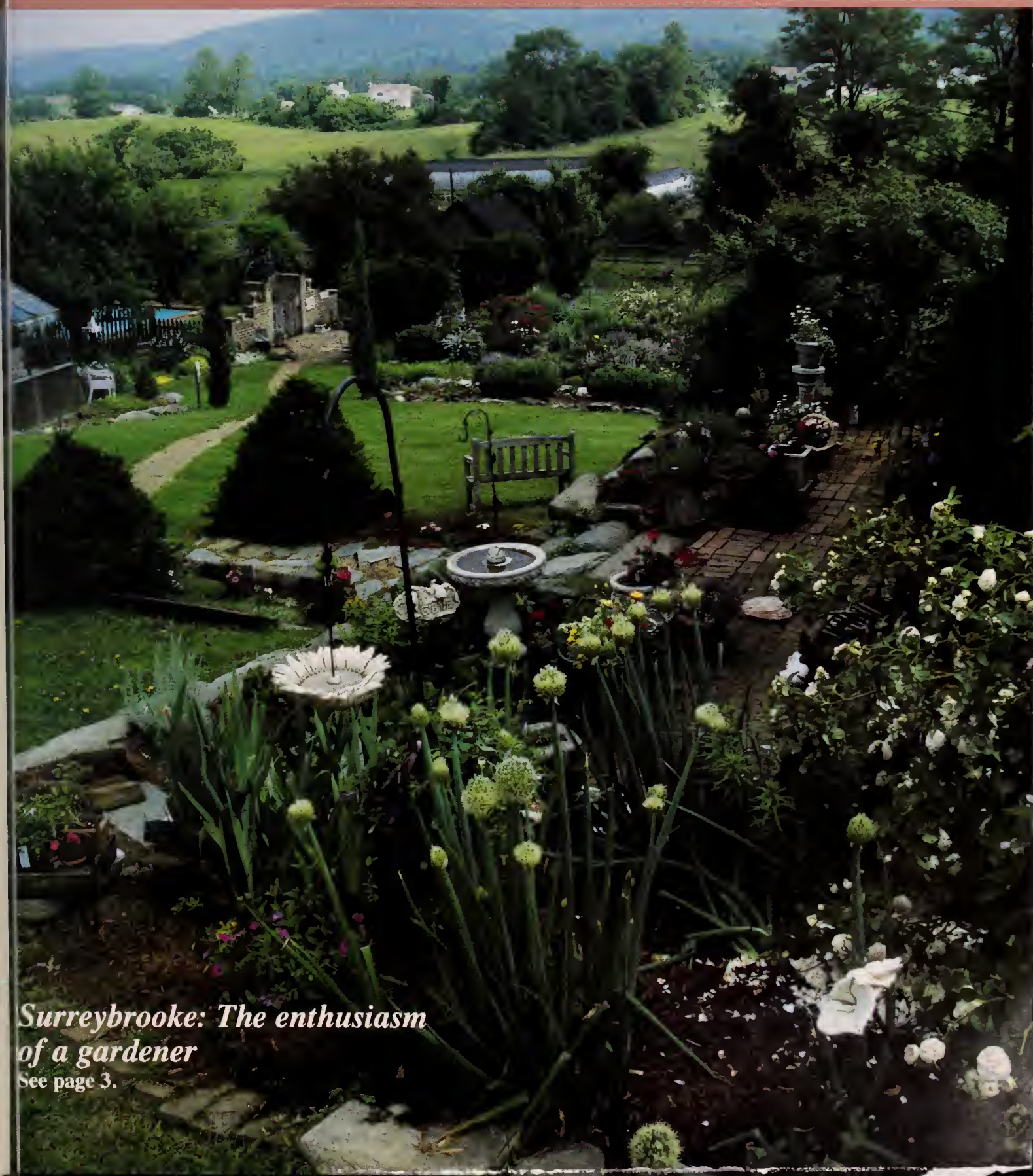
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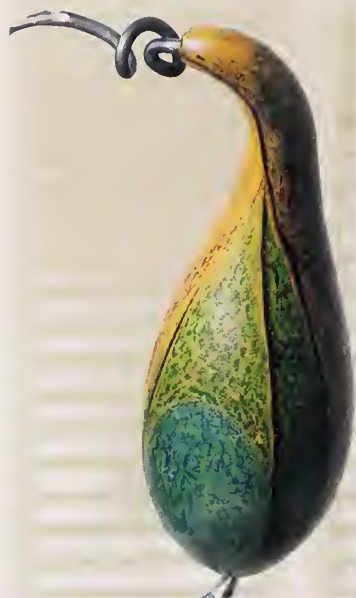
# GREEN SCENE

THE PENNSYLVANIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY • Sept./Oct. 1996 \$2.75



*Surreybrooke: The enthusiasm  
of a gardener*  
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29.

**Front cover:** The distant foothills would take your breath away if Surreybrooke proprietor Nancy Walz let them, but there's too much to see in this garden. Paths invite you in all directions, containers surprise you everywhere and the plants are all in a delightful muddle. photo by Russ Currey



*Grow with us.*

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Volume 25, Number 1 September/October 1996

**THE PENNSYLVANIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY**

100 N. 20th Street, Philadelphia, Pa. 19103-1495

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Monday through Friday 9:30am to 12 Noon (Hotline is closed in December)

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**Printer:** ALCOM Printing Group, Inc.

**The GREEN SCENE**, (USPS 955580), Volume 25, No. 1, published bimonthly, January, March, May, July, September, November, by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, a non-profit membership organization at 100 N. 20th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103. Subscription: \$12.95—Single Copy: \$2.75 (plus \$1.05 shipping). Second class postage paid at Philadelphia, PA 19103. • **POSTMASTER:** Send address change to THE GREEN SCENE, 100 N. 20th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103.

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**Green Scene subscriptions are part of the membership benefits for:**

Blithewold Mansion & Gardens, Bristol, Rhode Island  
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*the green scene / september 1996*



# The Enthusiasm of a Gardener

## SURREYBROOKE

 by Cheryl Lee Monroe

*"I cannot help doing the work I do, which feels vital as my breath."*

Anne Truitt (*Daybook*, Penguin Books, NY, NY, 1982)

Nancy Walz has a new rose bed, near the summer kitchen and pond. It will be another trademark garden, a vignette complete with a bench, martin house, containers and loads of flowers.

photo by Russ Currey





# SURREYBROOKE

**S**urreybrooke is a garden I have gawked at for years, revelling in its energy, in the vision and art that makes it so vibrant, and at Nancy Walz, its owner. "Enthusiasm rules the world," Nancy tells me, "and all you need to be a good gardener is enthusiastic." Nancy is definitely a good gardener and her garden speaks volumes not only about her enthusiasm but her skills. Surreybrooke, located in Frederick, Maryland, is extravagant, gushing plants and flowers; it lends itself to inspiration and education, and, to top it off, Nancy's livelihood is beautifully woven amongst the roses and peonies.

Surreybrooke is some 20 years old, its buildings over 100. An 1860's farmhouse, summer kitchen and the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains are the backdrops for this 15-acre farm, seven acres of which are the gardens, a specialty nursery and a small cottage holding Nancy's floral designs.

Nancy is not alone; Ron Walz and their four children have parts in this recreation, this business. Nancy is the plantswoman, Ron the engineer; together they make it work from greenhouses to pond and rock walls, from alpiners and roses, to herbs and wreaths. Ron will happily haul manure, cover a greenhouse, move pots and fix or create anything, as long as it's not comprised of chlorophyll. He places plants in the "mow-em" and "not mow-em" groups and checks with Nancy to identify their categories before proceeding. Nancy, on the other hand, is thoroughly devoted to her plants, her garden.

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## ***Wreaths & floral designs not standard***

Nancy's floral designs, in particular her dried wreaths, are not standard issue. They start differently: they begin with fresh-cut flowers. Cutting flowers straight from the garden, she constructs her wreaths without regard for drying most of the stems she uses. Early-season flowers and those with long stems or those that droop quickly are dried separately and tucked in later when wreaths are dry. Fresh wreaths are placed on ladders stretched across giant round hay bales in the dry, dark barn. The hay, collected in June, is stored for the other farm residents: the cows and horses. It's a perfect support for the ladders, and the dry air moves around the wreaths drying them quickly, preserving their colors perfectly (see box on page 7). Capturing a garden, saving it beautifully is an art. Nancy is an artist who can transform every manner of garden-grown and wild-collected plants into stunning fall wreaths.



photos by Russ Curry

At Surreybrooke in Frederick, Maryland, Nancy Walz crams wreaths with fresh-cut flowers from her garden. When the wreath dries, she fills leftover spaces with air-dried flowers. Completed, the wreaths embody Nancy's garden.

The expansive garden supports Nancy's designs, a garden she envisions as "English American with as many natives as possible." Her description is "structure with messiness." It's an excellent mess. Roses spill into the paths, paths you'd never know were six feet across; by midsummer only a fraction of brick shows. Herbs, perennials, tender perennials, annuals and happy self-sowing annuals and biennials are so exuberant one grows dizzy on their extravagant fragrance and colors.

All amidst the heat. It's hot and sultry below the Mason Dixon line which presents a challenge. So does Maryland's clay soil. The main house itself is built of bricks

made from the clay fields surrounding it. Nancy fervently seeks plants that tolerate the heat well, herbs topping the list, and she mulches like crazy. The cows and horses provide the manure she uses to build the garden soils every other year. Nancy has tried everything from manures to leafmold, Compro and mushroom soil only to come back around to manures. Weeds are a problem with manures, however, unless you can control the manufacturer's diet. There was a time when Nancy and her family pulled the weeds in the fields by hand. Now small localized spraying controls the weed population in the fields and to some extent in the gardens.





All the garden's a stage, and vignettes of flowers and the flavor of an 1860's home and summer kitchen make perfect entertainment.

### What's in the gardens?

The gardens are filled with roses, particularly pink. They add the magic in both the garden and floral designs. The roses of choice for wreaths, the polyanthas, ramble around in what appears a jumble. *Rosa* 'The Fairy' is a 2-ft. bush with great quantities of double pink flowers and decent disease resistance. It spills over the pathways in the entryways, and tumbles between the standard (tree) roses. *R* 'Cecile Brunner' is another polyantha Nancy uses for nosegays and boutonnieres; it comes in a climbing or bush form and resembles a miniature hybrid tea.

Shrub roses are another favorite. The Meidiland rose, *R. Scarlet Meidiland*®, the choice for beating the heat. It drips over the stone wall in the terraced garden, and shows utter disdain for heat, insects and diseases. It is loaded with double scarlet flowers primarily in June, and reblooms in summer throughout the fall. *R* 'Little White Pet,' a classic repeat bloomer, has large clusters of double white flowers, and like the rugosas (*R. rugosa*) are disease resistant.

Roses and herbs seem perfect mates, especially the wildly fragrant ones, and

many in the garden are grown for their scent. *R* 'Zephirine Drouhin' is one heavy on fragrance, and it dries well. It is susceptible to disease but its fragrance outweighs the problem. Nancy adheres to a weekly spray program, antique roses included. "Folks mistakenly think old roses need less care," notes Nancy. Not all old roses have terrific disease resistance; at Surreybrooke the old ones come under the spray regime. The moss rose (*R. moschata*) is another intensely fragrant rose, it's a natural sport of the cabbage roses, roses of the 1600s with rich, intoxicating fragrance they passed along as an inheritance.

My favorite garden is one built on a substantial slope, where three gardens are within a garden, all separated and joined by stone walls and steps, and brick pathways. Each of the three levels holds a different surprise, roses drip down from one garden into another, boxwood line paths and encircle great patches of *Dianthus* 'Bath's Pink,' one of the cheddar pinks with fragrance. An archway dripping silver lace vine (*Polygonum aubertii*), deep dark purple lilacs, and salix help enclose the spaces. Espaliered apples, a large Scarlet Meidi-

land® rose and *Tamarix ramosissima* lend structure and a feeling of "rooms" for plants to run among.

It all does run together and Nancy is undaunted by self-sowers, lupines being a favorite, and rowdy perennials. All gambol with sages, sedums, alchemillas, lavenders, and teuciums. *Lilium longiflorum* 'Black Dragon,' *Monarda didyma* 'Croftway Pink' and *Phlox paniculata* cultivars are soon overtaken by late summer and fall bloomers: asters, boltonia and perovskia.

Phlox, like roses, need some TLC to fight disease problems and are included in the weekly spray program. Nancy's choice for withstanding the heat is *Phlox paniculata* 'David,' a white selection. Veronicas like *V. teucrium* 'Crater Lake Blue,' a low grower and *V. spicata* mingle with iris, *Penstemon digitalis* 'Huskies Red' and herbs like the scented geraniums, rosemary and thymes. *Saponaria ocymoides*, a low-growing perennial, runs around everywhere, its small pink flowers excellent in May and June. Nancy adores it, favoring it over the snazzier *S. xlempergii* 'Max Frei' that's in vogue these days.

Weeding, whacking and watering is how



# SURREYBROOKE

Nancy describes her job. She tells the story of the bewildered folks she meets in the wee hours of the morning where she exercises. "They think I don't have a job," Nancy tells in fun. "I come and go in my blue jeans." A self-taught gardener, a music major and horsewoman in some past life, Nancy once invited her mother to help herself, dig up all the plants growing at the first home she purchased. She couldn't be bothered with gardening.

Spring came and she was enthralled by the unfolding of this garden she'd inherited. There was no going back and Nancy's priorities were in order when she and Ron moved to the current farm. The house, built during the Civil War, was a shambles; there was no running water, no electricity, and Nancy's first job was to dig a garden to plant her peas.

Hardly a vegetable can be found in her private gardens these days; flowers are priority. In the specialty nursery also, because Nancy sells the plants she loves. You'll hardly find a vegetable there either; and no begonias, impatiens or petunias. I don't count the 3-in. Hawaiian impatiens in clay pots, or the royal purple of *Petunia × integrifolia*. Tomatoes are tucked in the cutting garden as are a few onions grown from seed. Blackberries also reside in the cutting garden, a wooden frame attempting to draw them a boundary line; the long canes tucked in the structure.

## The cutting garden

The cutting garden is for fresh bouquets, arrangements for a wedding or party, and flowers to put on wreaths. The remaining flowers are dried. The cutting garden gets priority come June when annuals and tender perennials are planted. An archway of willow welcomes you and for a short time you can wander on the mulch paths; soon you'll be unable to find them. *Perovskia atriplicifolia* 'Longin' borders one side, the fragrant moss and musk roses on the other. Artemisias, larkspur, tender salvias and *Agastachys* are tucked in around farm-style rows sporting annual crops like celosia and sunflowers. One of Nancy's favorite annuals is the unicorn flower (*Proboscidea louisianica*) with woody seed pods that have long curved beaks. When sprayed gold, its pods are terrific for the December holidays.

What is probably one of the first gardens, runs from the back of the house to the summer kitchen. The summer kitchen was in a swamp when Nancy first arrived but "one job seems to lead to another" she says. When rocks needed to be moved Nancy carted them wheelbarrow by wheelbarrow



**Top:** Troughs are a big deal at Surreybrooke. Nancy Walz adores alpine plants and these miniature gardens are tucked in everywhere, happy amidst the plants, thriving in the sun and heat. **Bottom:** Nancy puts containers together the way the best interior designers decorate homes. Flair and fun make for loads of unusual containers scattered all about the gardens from the top of walls to benches and bare spots.

down to the summer kitchen. The summer kitchen is no longer mired in mud and you make your way down the path past a mature *Corylus avellana* 'Contorta,' better known as Harry Lauder's walking stick, amongst ferns, virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*), and around the lilac *Syringa patula* 'Miss Kim' that hugs the corner. There under a large *Prunus × yedoensis*, that smells heavenly in spring, stands the summer kitchen. Nancy makes candles here. She sticks to the old way of doing it, scenting them with garden herbs and dipping them from a cauldron that hangs over a wood fire.

Other gardens wander around the pool, the side of the house, along the fences. Many of the plants are for cutting and drying, roses and hydrangea are in abun-

dance. Shady spots hold hellebores and japanese painted ferns (*Athyrium goeringianum* 'Pictum') and *Pulmonaria*. Golden marjoram winds its way through sunny spots and amongst sage and daylilies, the amsonia and gypsophila (baby's breath). And there are containers everywhere: baskets, clay pots, window boxes, even boxes on the bridge crossing the stream. All explode with annuals and tender perennials like tender salvia like *S. greggi*, verbena, nicotiana, and mexican marigold (*Tagetes minuta*), a plant that adores pot culture.

## Troughs

The containers I love best are the troughs. Ron likes making the troughs; Nancy has a weakness for alpiners. The troughs are made of porous stone-like concrete and



### When You Can Visit

Surreybrooke, a member of the American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta, is open daily from April to June; Wednesday through Sunday at all other times. Call ahead for a recording on times, leave a message for directions. Nancy will be in the garden: 301-371-7466.

### Sources

The Flowery Branch  
P.O. Box 1330  
Flowery Branch, GA 30542  
1-770-536-8330  
Catalog \$3

Well-Sweep Herb Farm  
317 Mt. Bethel Road  
Port Murray, NJ 07865  
1-908-852-5390  
Catalog \$2

White Flower Farm  
P.O. Box 50  
Litchfield, CT 06759  
1-800-503-9624  
Catalog \$5

clay and must drain well like the native habitats of alpine. They love soil similar to their native screes; Nancy advises gritty sand, stone dust with loam and leaf mold. Nancy's troughs are filled with *Arenaria*; saxifrages (like *Saxifraga* 'Apple Blossom'); primulas; *Arabis* (like *A. ferdinandi-coburgi* 'Variegata'); Iberis; *Cerastium* and *Lewisia*, all in delightful miniature. Lewisias are Nancy's favorite but they're particular about their habitat. Nancy tore a stone wall apart this year to build a new home for them; she's still seeking the perfect spot.

Surreybrooke's small specialty nursery is buried amidst the gardens that wrap around it. Benches are tucked amidst aronia hedges, tree peonies, and paths lined with roses. Nancy sells what she puts in her garden. She loves finding plants and uses her E-mail to hunt down a plant she can't be without.

### An open garden

Surreybrooke is open to the public to wander in, to seek ideas and inspiration; and to buy plants if one wishes. Nancy is always around and her enthusiasm is contagious. You can ask questions, swap plants, discuss soils, fertilizers or when to harvest something to dry.

A garden open to all is part of Nancy's

### FRESH WREATHS

"Cut when flowers look best in the garden and experiment!"

Nancy Walz

Make wreaths as Nancy Walz of Surreybrooke does. Start with fresh flowers on the wreath, then dry the wreaths in hot, dry, dark places. Finally, tuck in flowers you air dried; those you harvest in early summer or ones that droop quickly.

#### Flowers to Use While Fresh

*Thymus* spp.  
*Salvia officinalis* (sage)  
*Satureja* spp. (savory)  
*Artemisia absinthium* (wormwood)  
*Artemisia absinthium* 'Powis Castle'  
*Humulus lupulus* (hop)  
Lavender (foliage)  
*Nepeta* (foliage)  
*Polygonum aubertii* (silver lace vine)  
Roses  
*Ocimum basilicum* 'Purple Ruffles' or  
'Purpurascens' (Purple Basil)  
*Perovski atriplicifolia*

#### Roses to Use

*Rosa* 'Cecil Brunner'  
*R.* 'The Fairy'  
*R.* 'Little White Pets'  
*R.* 'Pristine'  
*R.* Scarlett® Meidiland

#### Artemisias to Use

*Artemisia absinthium* 'Powis Castle'  
*A. ludoviciana* 'Silver King'  
*A. ludoviciana* 'Silver Queen'  
*A. pontica* (Roman)  
*A. annua* (sweet annie)

#### Lavenders to Use

*Lavandula angustifolia* 'Hidcote'  
*L. angustifolia* 'Munstead'

These cultivars have dark blue colors and they have one grand flush of flowers, which are excellent when you wish to harvest. Selections with repeated blooming, where old and new

flowers are on the plant at the same time are good garden plants but tougher to cut and dry.

#### Wild Gathered Flowers

*Achillea millefolium* (yarrow)  
*Anaphalis margaritacea* (pearly everlasting)  
*Capsella bursa-pastoris* (Shepherd's Purse)  
*Eupatorium purpureum* (joe pye weed)  
*Eupatorium perfoliatum* (boneset)  
*Lepidium sativum* (pepper grass)  
*Rumex acetosa* (sorrel)  
*Solidago canadensis* (goldenrod)

#### On Berried Items

Try Aronia; when dried they only last six months, plenty of time to appreciate them. The same goes for Mahonia, both foliage and berries last a short 3-4 months but then it's time to get ready for spring.

#### For Air Drying

*Agastache* spp.  
*Alchemilla mollis* (lady's mantle)  
*Belamcanda chinensis* (blackberry lily)  
*Gomphrena globosa*  
*Helianthus* spp. (Sunflowers)  
*Helichrysum bracteatum* (strawflowers)  
*Lavandula angustifolia*  
*Mentha pulegium* (pennyroyal)  
*Nepeta* spp.  
*Paeonia* spp.

dream. She's building a big garden, big because Nancy and her family are the majority of the labor force. You can already see a new garden taking shape, the upright taxus are in place, beautiful large urns and containers await a home and the strings mark the boundaries; it looks to be some 60-ft. across, 40-ft. deep. Future plans include a meadow she and Ron are already working on, the continued addition of native trees, and an alpine garden. There

will probably always be plants for sale. "I love it when I find a great plant," says Nancy, and so do her visitors.

•

Cheryl Lee Monroe, a frequent contributor to *Green Scene*, is a horticulturist who trades in plants. She divides her free time between her loves: her family and her garden. She resides in Myersville, Maryland.

# Create Treasures from Gourds

## Don't Throw That Moldy Old Gourd Away!

by Vickie L. Mowrer



'The Lone Loon': This piece is from the collection of Bill and Marilyn Ebel, proprietors of the Gardens of Eden Bed & Breakfast in Lancaster, PA. Marilyn creates fabulous flower arrangements and has decorated the base of this piece to use as an accessory to her designs. To create the loon, Vickie Mowrer combined carving, dyeing and burning.

photos by Ira Beckoff

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The gourd is much more than a cousin to the cucumber. It's the pottery of the plant world. It has been used for fisherman's net floats, vessels, cricket cages, musical instruments, hats and jewelry. In many primitive societies the fruit is still converted into bowls, ladles, baskets and buckets. It's fashioned into rattles, masks and drums for ceremonial purposes. It has even been used as currency. Haitian paper money is called gourdes, the Spanish name for gourds. After the abolition of slavery, the Haitian people became dependent on wild produce, and gourds were collected for the treasury by soldiers. The story of the gourd is a fascinating historical and cultural account.

Gourds became part of my garden repertoire by default. One afternoon I spied some weirdly contorted thing growing in my neighbor's garden, which my artistic eye found interesting. When it was ready for harvest my neighbor kindly gave it to me. I found just the right spot to display it

on the front porch. It sat there for awhile looking fantastic and then little by little it turned more and more moldy and uglier and uglier. The garden was also the compost area. I employed the labor-saving trench method at the time: Dig a trench, throw in your compostable material, cover it with earth, let Mother Nature perform her magic. That moldy, ugly gourd got tossed into the trench and buried sometime during the winter. No surprise what happened the next year, tender little shoots emerged with the warm spring sunshine. The only problem was that I couldn't recall where I'd buried the gourd vs. the pumpkins and the squashes. Dreaming of Thanksgiving pumpkin pies and zucchini-laden ratatouille while doing springtime weeding and culling, I decided to let some of these volunteer sprouts remain.

Of course, as the plants grew and the fruits developed, I realized I wasn't going to be baking Thanksgiving pies with some of these fruits. But boy were they fun to

watch. Suspecting that some of the volunteer plants were probably gourd vines, I decided to let them do their thing. As they grew larger and took form, I became more and more fascinated.

Although I grew up on a farm, we *never* raised gourds. Couldn't eat 'em. But what could I do with them? I had learned through other self-sufficiency enthusiasts that luffa sponges were made from gourds, but surely I must be able to do something more fun and creative than that. As I observed their forms constantly changing shape as they matured, I began to see creatures. It was a little like cloud watching in slow motion.

One day while I was reading *Organic Gardening*, I saw an ad inviting readers to join The American Gourd Society. I mailed in my \$3 and became a member. Their publication, *The Gourd*, announced 'The World's Largest Gourd Show' in Mt. Gilead, Ohio, held annually the first weekend of October. That fall I was in my car and on



my way with a gourd creature I had created to enter into whatever class it might qualify for.

**What a wonderful experience!** I drove away with a blue ribbon in the Most Artistic class, a car crammed with raw gourd material ready to be crafted, and sweet, sweet memories of many moments spent with kind, gentle, helpful and encouraging people who affectionately refer

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*The common ornamentals may be dried and crafted but hardshells are the royalty.*

---

to themselves as 'Gourd Heads.'

Fashioning an object from a gourd involves some basic guidelines. Before painting, an artist must learn three practical processes: how to prepare the canvas, what tools to choose, and how to use those tools properly. Then you can let your creative imagination soar. As I mentioned earlier I usually see 'creatures' of some type. The largest body of my work is birdlike (see photos). I have also created functional and decorative vessels and some interesting human image-inspired pieces.

I normally begin by placing the fruit I plan to work on in a spot where I am able to view it frequently as I go about my daily tasks. I observe its form, its surface texture and coloring. Every now and then I will pick it up and run my hands over its curves. Sooner or later an idea emerges. I sketch the patterns onto the gourd with a pencil and from there it begins to tell me what it wants to become.

Basically, there are two types of gourds: ornamentals and hardshells. All belong to the Cucurbitaceae family. The common ornamentals may be dried and crafted but hardshells are the royalty. The following instructions are about using hardshells, most of which belong to the genus *Lagenaria*. Whether you grow a gourd or buy it, the first challenge is to dry it properly.

Leave the gourds on the vine as long as possible in the garden patch. Harvest them after a good hard frost with at least one inch of stem still attached. If purchasing, make sure the gourd hasn't been cut from the vine before a hard frost and that an inch or more of stem remains. Put them on a rack in a cool shed or attic with good air circulation and do not let them touch one another. Gourds may be dried out-of-doors but must be lifted off the ground. The



**Top:** 'The Mating Game.' The brightly colored 'male' of the species spins an animated tale to his 'female' friend, who, of course, listens quietly. **Bottom:** Untitled. The second piece in a new series of work incorporating pigmented beeswax to paint the surfaces. Future pieces will continue to bring other mediums into play to create intricate sculptures combining elements from nature with the hand of the artist.



**Top:** Gourd: a one-eyed woman — a treasure box that will hold a secret wish, a piece of jewelry created by carving, dyeing and burning. **Bottom:** Art metal adds a delightful element to the pieces. The iron's ability to bend and twist allows nature's movement to be captured and repeated by art metal-smith Greg Leavitt, creator of the beautifully forged metal integral to the success of many of the author's gourd pieces.

drying process can take up to six months so don't panic and throw them away when they begin to get moldy. Molding is part of the natural process that releases moisture from the inside of the gourd.

With patience and a bit of luck you will be left with a nice lightweight gourd ready to be cleaned. Remove the epidermis by soaking the gourd in warm soapy water for 15 to 20 minutes. Then scrape it off with a

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*Don't panic and throw them away when they begin to get moldy. Molding is part of the natural process that releases moisture from the inside of the gourd.*

---

dull knife. This is not a difficult process although it is a bit time consuming. The reward for your effort is instant, however, because with each push or pull of the knife blade you uncover the incredibly smooth rich golden-brown surface hidden beneath its protective layer.

Next, rinse the gourd well and allow it to dry thoroughly (approximately eight hours), then sand lightly with a fine grit sandpaper to remove any surface blemishes. You are





Art truly is in the details, which were burned, carved, etched and dyed on the gourd. The gourd shell was hard and thick, which enabled the deep carving that creates texture and brings the object to life.

now ready to begin to create your masterpiece.

A hard-shelled gourd is durable. It is much like a piece of wood. You can burn it, carve it, cut it, dye it and paint it. Exacto knives, wood-burning tools, linoleum block cutting tools, and electric Dremels are the gourd artist's basic tool kit. But don't be afraid to experiment with anything that strikes you as possible. One time I baked a gourd in a very hot oven just to see what would happen. The effect was interesting but the smell was not. Putting one in a charcoal grill might turn out something magical. If anyone decides to try it, please let me know the results.

Carving produces a routed out area that can be left natural or dyed. Wood stains or liquid shoe polishes color well. Burning a gourd with wood-burning tools can produce varied effects. Some wood-burning kits come with exchangeable nibs. Try them out on a sample gourd to see how the different tips and temperatures affect the material. Use the tips flat, sideways, with a soft touch or with a heavy hand. You will learn quickly what your preferences are. Combining carving and burning and dyeing can produce some beautiful results.

Do you want to cut the gourd for any

reason? Perhaps to make an open vessel such as a bowl or planter? Or to make an entrance to a gourd birdhouse? Band saws are great for the former and keyhole saws for the latter. If you would like to use a gourd as a planter the interior must be waterproofed. Do this by melting parafin, pouring it into the gourd and swishing it around to coat the inside completely. Doing it twice will insure that moisture won't leak and ruin your painstaking work.

A birdhouse is an excellent first project to play with. I can't think of a horticulturally minded person I know who does not treasure our feathered friends and making an enchanted home for a family or two is rewarding. However do what is in **your** mind's eye. That might be anything from a tiny vessel that holds a cherished object to a giant penguin. Whatever it is, try to find some gourds shaped to fit your project. The 'World's Largest Gourd Show' in Mt. Gilead, Ohio (October 5 & 6), is a wonderful place to locate any form that you could possibly dream of (see box for AGS information). You might even make friends with a few 'Gourd Heads' during your stay, and then maybe, just maybe... become one yourself!

### More About Gourds

Join The American Gourd Society, which produces wonderful books and literature. The AGS address is P.O. Box 274, Mt. Gilead, OH 43338-0274.

A book filled with good information and a lot of photographs to get your juices flowing is called *Gourd Crafts* by Carolyn Mordecai, Crown Publishers, Inc., N.Y., N.Y., 1978.

Available to members through our PHS Library.

**See Gourd Exhibits at PHS's Harvest Show,** Silver Screen Harvest, Saturday and Sunday, September 21 & 22, 10am to 5pm at the Horticulture Center, Fairmount Park. For information about price and entering exhibits, see box on page 14.

Vickie Mowrer trained in art, floral decorating and garden design at Temple University, The Philadelphia School of Textile and The John Brooks School of Garden Design in England. She creates floral magic, gardens of merit and sculpture in the Philadelphia region and beyond. She may be reached at 215-482-7292.



# LIVING WREATHS

## *Classical Yet Ephemeral*

 by Michael J. LoFurno



*Ipomoea quamoclit* (cypress vine).

**E**ach summer, the grapevines grow well beyond the trellis. By fall, my neighbor and gardening partner Stephen and I, must prune the grapes drastically to keep them at bay. Our frugal disposition makes us want to utilize all those cuttings. But they're too cumbersome to compost; we wouldn't think of bagging them for the trash. So we weave them into wreaths for holiday giving. They're natural, fashionable, and make great house gifts — a fine reminder of Druid traditions. Nonetheless, too much of a good thing is, well, you know.

Faced with a heap of leftover wreaths one year, we pondered what to do with them in other seasons. After a bit of head-scratching, Stephen came upon the notion of using one as a base for training container-grown vines. The garden had become an experimental station for all sorts of twining vines (not just grapes) and, frankly, the sight of all those sticks and stakes and poles and cages added nothing to the character of the garden. Besides, poles without spurs or hooks are sometimes too slick to carry the weight as the size and quantity of leaves increases — the case of the shrinking vine. Solution: add one twining vine to one grapevine wreath to yield one smashing, exuberant presentation that is classical yet ephemeral.

At least we thought so. Happily, so did some of the judges at the Harvest Show (produced by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society). In 1994, we took a blue ribbon for our lone entry in the "Ornamental Plants Grown in Containers" section — *Ipomoea quamoclit* (cypress vine). In 1995, they awarded five ribbons to six of our entries in various classes. One of the three blue-ribbon winners was also awarded the PHS Bronze Medal, Best in Show, selected from among the 20 blue-ribbon winners in the section "Container-grown Vegetables, Flowers, and Annuals." The bronze medal winner was also cypress vine.

Here are some tips that helped us make the entries blue-ribbon winners.

### ***Making the wreaths***

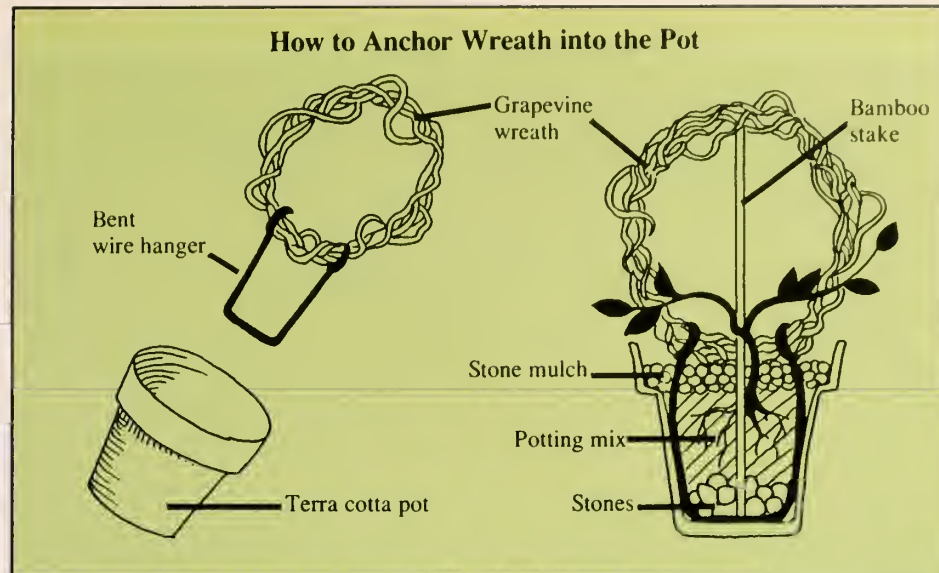
We use grapevines, but any pliable yet woody branch will do — *Ampelopsis*, *Parthenocissus*, even *Salix* branches.

To make a wreath, we first select a base branch about four or five times as long as





*Passiflora caerulea* (bluecrown passionflower).



the intended diameter. We coil the branch into a circle of the right size, and then wrap the remainder in a spiral around the beginning section, checking to make sure the shape is as nearly circular as possible. A branch that is too thick will not bend properly and one that is too thin will not hold its shape; a branch about one-fourth to three-eighths of an inch thick usually works best. The second branch should be about as long as the first. We insert one end in the space created by the crossing branches, and begin spiralling right away. It takes about 10 or more branches to complete the wreath. The branches may shrink as they dry, so we make each wreath a bit fuller than we want to allow for that.

When we use grapevines, we trim off any obtrusive side branches, but leave the tendrils on; they add considerably to the texture of the finished wreath and provide an additional foothold for the living vines that we later train onto the wreath. We let the finished wreath dry for several weeks on a flat surface before use.

### Container/wreath size

We experimented with wreaths of various sizes and determined that a diameter between 14 and 20 inches works best. Larger wreaths are initially striking, but can become flimsy as they dry. In addition, the guidelines for competing in the Harvest Show classes dictate a maximum size of 36 inches in any direction.

For this size wreath, we selected standard or azalea pots of 8 to 12 inches in diameter. We chose terra cotta for that classic look.

To anchor the wreath into the pot, Stephen fashions a wire coat hanger so that it hooks onto the wreath and also reaches to the inside bottom of the pot with the wreath just touching the pot rim. He then anchors the wire with stones placed at the bottom of the pot. After filling the pot with soil mix, a bamboo stake is used to keep the wreath

vertical; the stake is neatly trimmed at the top of the wreath.

The soil mix varies with the plant variety, but always includes potting soil, perlite, sand, and compost. Either seeds are sown directly in the pot, or small rooted cuttings are used.

### Plants suitable for wreath-growing

Selecting a vine suitable for wreath-training depends on a variety of factors. A plant with handsome, durable and densely growing leaves is ideal for a "green wreath," while one with showy flowers or fruit can make for an ever-changing presentation.

*Ipomoea quamoclit* [formerly *Quamoclit pennata*] is named cypress vine for its lacy foliage, which resembles that of the cypress tree. A rapid grower, it adds several inches per day. It must be planted from seed each year, but can rapidly grow out of bounds. The scarlet funnel-shaped flowers open early morning and evening and resemble fiery stars. It is best to sow the seeds directly where you want them to grow and begin training the young plants immediately. An unguided seedling can quickly develop kinks in the stem that diminish its attractiveness.

*Passiflora vitifolia* (red tasconia), *P. caerulea* (bluecrown passionflower), and *P. incarnata* (maypop) — have incredibly exotic flowers. *P. caerulea* sports blue/pink/purple flowers, three to four inches wide, and blue-green, five-part leaves four to seven inches wide. *P. vitifolia*, a coarse plant, sports scarlet flowers four to six inches across and bright green, three-part leaves, three to six inches long. The flowers are borne singly or in clusters of two or three. *P. incarnata*, our native species, has smaller white/purple flowers at two inches across. Its bright green, three-part leaves are about three to six inches wide. Because of its smaller scale, it may be the safest bet for starting out as a wreath-grower.

Each of the *Passiflora*, if potted and kept outdoors, will perish in northern winters, but plants protected from excessive cold and wind may come back to life the following spring.

*Stephanotis floribunda* (Madagascar jasmine) is a fine durable vine with shiny, thick leaves up to four inches long. The fragrant white flowers are one to two inches long and can be profuse and long-lasting. Frances Howard (*Landscaping with Vines*, Macmillan, New York, 1959) reports that "the plant is well adapted to pot culture indoors, as it grows fairly slowly and always has a clean, neat appearance."

### Training

The growth rate of a particular variety will dictate how much attention it requires. A rapid grower such as cypress vine requires training at least every day. The slow-growing *Stephanotis*, on the other hand, requires only a little coaxing once in 10 days. Although some vines have a natural winding habit (a phenomenon scientists call thigmotropic nutation), they tend ultimately to grow vertically — to the sun. Coaxing or forcing them to grow in a circular motion requires regular intervention. Twining vines such as *Ipomoea* must be spiralled about the wreath in a counter-clockwise direction. At intervals, we push the leader through the weave of the wreath. Some vines, such as *Passiflora*, on the other hand, do not wind naturally. The tendrils of these vines must be made to grab the wreath while the main vine is coaxed into a circular shape. This requires dexterity and sensitivity to prevent the vine from transecting the circle.

### Show prep

For competitive exhibiting, the motto is: "Presentation is Everything." Plants of similar size, health, and vigor lose out to the blue ribbon winners because a dried leaf, a





*Passiflora incarnata* (maypop).

**The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's  
1996 Harvest Show — Silver Screen Harvest**

Enjoy the educational exhibitors and  
shop in our horticultural marketplace.

**Saturday and Sunday, September 21-22 at 10am-5pm  
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Admission:  
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Enter your garden's bounty in more than 100 preserved product  
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**Entry Times and Dates:**

Entry Time for Most Classes:  
Thursday, September 19, 3:30-7pm  
Friday, September 20, 7:30-10am

Call the Shows Office for further information at 215-988-8800.

photo by Michael J. LoFurno

spent flower, or an insect-damaged area distracts the judges' attention. We spend a significant amount of time primping the plants throughout the season, but especially on the day before the Harvest Show, just before packing, and after arrival at the Show. Turning the plants and viewing them from different angles reveals defects not seen if viewed from only one vantage point. Every leaf, flower, and tendril that is not perfect must be picked off before judging, which can be a chore, since we do not use any chemicals to control pests in our garden.

The other motto we keep in mind is: "First impressions are lasting ones." A clean pot, a groomed plant, and an attractive ground surface create an instant, if unconscious, impression on the judge or observer. Studying other blue-ribbon winners has taught us that a clean layer of gravel, stones, or fresh soil on the surface can create an immediate look of professional care.

Our efforts have paid off in three ways. First, we devised a novel use for surplus vine trimmings. Second, we found an alternative to pole training that made our collection of twining vines look more attractive in the garden. Third, we were able to show off our handiwork while competing successfully in another of the Harvest Show classes. The challenge now is to find even more vines to train into living wreaths for summer or year-round enjoyment.

**Related Reading**

*Landscaping with Vines*, Frances Howard, Macmillan, New York, 1959.

*Passionflowers*, John Vanderplank, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1991.

These books are available to members at the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society Library.

Michael J. LoFurno, a registered landscape architect and professional planner, is a principal of Composite, a Philadelphia-based planning and design firm. LoFurno has received several awards from the American Society of Landscape Architects. Together with Stephen Maciejewski, he has won Best in Show in the Container Grown Vegetables, Fruits & Annuals section of the 1995 Harvest Show, as well as awards in PHS's City Gardens Contest.



# How to Have a Fall Garden



by Jane Lennon

photo by Patrick Radebaugh



A partial view of Josephine's Garden at People's Light and Theatre near Malvern. Pink *Begonia grandis*, the hardy begonia, blooms in the shade of a dogwood in the early fall.

One day years ago I stopped to visit my gardening cousin Jo Bachman. When it became clear that she was trapped in a lengthy telephone conversation I went outside to wait. My irritation at the interrupting caller immediately vanished; I was dazzled by Jo's late September flower garden. The color themes were still intact. The leaves, silver, variegated golden and green were fresh and plump. Among the wonderful foliage, 22 different flowers bloomed. I counted them because I was stunned. Nothing visible in the garden was dead, broken or fallen over. No gaping holes, no flattened circles of collapsed stems, no ghostly remains of summer cluttered her sumptuous fall garden.

The plants in bloom included the workhorses of fall, but summer flowers long gone in other gardens here

bloomed profusely. I began to make a list of varieties. Every garden visit is a lesson. Jo's *Salvia pitcheri* was two feet tall, with 20 stems, each topped with a mass of brilliant blue. I had tried that *Salvia pitcheri*, six feet long, lying flat with bright blue ends. All of Jo's full-blooming plants were thick and luxurious clumps. Why were mine tall and floppy? A white button, feverfew, a spring plant for me, was a crisp perky filler here in late September. Red and pink zinnias bloomed above a purple carpet of *Eupatorium coelestinum*, the hardy ageratum.

Cousin Jo came outside, we walked around and talked garden and plants for a few minutes, then I had to rush away. The next year Jo and Charlie Bachman moved from their house in Radnor to an apartment in



**Below:** An herbal corner of the theatre garden. A white *Althaea* 'Diana' is the background for a paved terrace and bench among fragrant herbs and flowers. **At right:** View of the People's Light and Theatre garden in late September. *Stachys*, *sedum*, *anemone*, and *boltonia* are fall specialties of this garden.

photos by Patrick Radebaugh



Paoli. They moved their Radnor garden to the People's Light and Theatre near Malvern. The theatre had just moved to the property and the Bachmans, long-time friends of the theatre group, saw a wonderful opportunity. They offered to move their garden to the theatre, make a new garden and maintain it. The Bachmans didn't wish to continue maintaining buildings, but they needed a garden. The People's Light and Theatre, Josephine's Garden, has evolved and grown for the past 15 years under Jo's capable hands and patient teaching to assorted garden helpers, both paid and volunteer.

I've worked in the theatre garden from time to time. I love the energy level of the People's Light, and it's fun being in a garden full of people. Once we planned to put a cobblestone edge around a long border. Each cobble weighs about 20 pounds and they were piled far from the bed. Jo got the word around and everyone on the lot, actors, costumers, students, office workers and producer carried a cobble or two and left them around the edge. All made a heavy job light and easy.

Over the years the theatre garden has grown, changed, been built over and moved around, and it has been enjoyed by thou-

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***My fall garden in a good year rivals the theatre garden. By being one of the garden helpers I've learned how to coax a long flower season from our garden. I've acquired many great plants that further lengthen the season, and I learned how to grow them.***

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sands of people. Some of the trees moved from Radnor are quite large and beautiful. The acid-loving plants, rhododendrons, azaleas, laurel and leucothoe died quickly in the lime pit that is the theatre garden. Viburnums moved as tiny plants are now a huge hedge along Rt. 401, and boxwood cuttings from the early '70s line the walks and frame the newest theatre building.

My fall garden in a good year rivals the theatre garden. By being one of the garden helpers I've learned how to coax a long flower season from our garden. I've acquired many great plants that further lengthen the season, and I learned how to grow them.

Bushy multi-stemmed clumps of late perennials are produced by pinching off the tips of the stem, several times, before

August. Salvias, asters, chrysanthemum, goldenrod and eupatorium are good candidates for pinching. The reward is two or four or eight times the bloom on a much shorter plant that probably won't fall over. What results!

A sharp scissors is the tool to keep a garden going. Deadheading, removing spent flowers, keeps many plants blooming. *Echinops*, globe thistle bloom in June and early July, but if the flower stalk is cut right back to the ground after it's finished it will bloom again in the fall.

*Salvia superba* is a May-flowering plant, but will continue to bloom into the fall if you cut off dead flower stems promptly. While cutting off dead flowers, strip away any buggy, broken, diseased or otherwise horrible bits of plant life you may encounter. *Rudbeckia*, black-eyed susans, and *Echinacea*, purple cone flowers, in good soil continue to flower without much attention. Others of the sunflower group, heliopsis, helenium, and gaillardia all bloom more when cut more.

Patience with fall plants contributes in large measure to success. Many late-flowering plants are coarse green lumps or mats for many months, and a gardener can get tired of waiting. *Lobelia siphilitica*,





great blue lobelia, grows all through my garden looking like large forgotten weeds. Then in August it blooms, true blue and quite wonderful. *Eupatorium coelestinum*, mist flower or hardy ageratum, is an aggressive green carpet enlarging itself, until it comes into bloom. It's a mass of glorious light purple fuzzy flowers, worth the wait and space.

Japanese anemones are the stars of my fall garden. They are vigorous growers, their handsome dark green, three-part leaves marching out from the parent plant. Japanese anemones are great background plants all summer. *Anemone tomentosa*, a pale pink one, 30-in. tall, blooms in August followed by deep rosy pink *Anemone hupehensis*, then all of the various forms and colors of *Anemone hupehensis* var. *japonica*. Every one is marvelous. The Japanese anemones bloom through Halloween.

Old-fashioned *Hosta lancifolia*, the small-leaved edging hosta, has good lavender flowers in September. It grows equally well in sun or shade and is great under and around taller plants, as is *Cerastium*, *Plumbago* and smoky-leaved *Corydalis lutea*, which blooms constantly until frost.

Every shady corner is stuffed with

### How to Have a Fall Garden

- If you want fall flowers, plant them.
- Pinch everything two or three times.
- Deadhead — relentlessly. If it's a daisy, it will bloom again.
- If it's horrible, broken, buggy, or diseased — cut it off.
- If you want, need or expect 100% from a garden, provide soil, water and fertilizer to produce that result.
- Patience.

### Plants in Bloom in September

Aster	Verbena
Artemisia	Helenium
Anemone	Lobelia
Feverfew (Chrysanthemum)	Eupatorium
Heliopsis	Chelone
Begonia	Shasta daisy
Corydalis	(Chrysanthemum)
Rudbeckia	Plumbago
Echinacea	Summer Phlox
Echinopsis	Boltonia
	Chrysanthemum

*Begonia grandis*, a hardy begonia. This wonderful hardy plant looks exotic and beautiful all summer; with its angel wing leaves it blooms heavy pink tresses of flowers from Labor Day until a hard frost. Once these begonias get a foothold in a garden they increase happily and can be moved around to fill in over spring bulbs or other unoccupied corners.

Handsome clumps of grasses in their pink or golden fall colors, black-green evergreens and the developing red, brown, gold and yellow leaves on deciduous trees create a frame for a full garden. Flower colors seem especially luminous in the light of September and October.

One visit to a cousin's garden inspired me to have a longer garden season. Her garden has inspired hundreds of other gardeners. The People's Light and Theatre Company's garden near Malvern is not handy for everyone but these tips come to you from Josephine and her generous garden.

Jane Lennon writes and gardens at Cherrymont Farm Nursery, Berks County, Pennsylvania.



# *Alchemilla mollis*:

## A plant dividend that offers continual rewards

by Richard L. Bitner

This Country/Side gardener's favorite groundcover and mixing-in-with-just-about-everything plant is lady's mantle, *Alchemilla mollis*. I have it growing throughout my rather large garden. It appears here and there as an edging plant among perennials, as a groundcover with hostas and other shade-tolerant plants, in full-sun wet areas by a streamlet, around dwarf conifers and ericaceous plants and in containers.

I started with a single plant obtained at the PHS members' annual plant dividend about 10 years ago (see information about this year's dividend in box). I soon learned why some generous member was anxious to share this plant. It quickly settled into my garden and is there for good. It's attractive, versatile, easy to grow and pest-free.

*Alchemilla* has appeared in our gardens only in the last few decades, although it was grown in Europe since the Middle Ages as a medicinal plant. I have found no reference to this invaluable ornamental by my favorite early 20th-century garden writers: Richardson Wright, Louise Beebe Wilder, H.K. Morse, Anna Gilman Hill, Louise Shelton and Alice Morse Earle. Yet every contemporary book includes it, usually proclaiming its virtues though occasionally condemning the flower color and tendency to spread.

*Alchemilla mollis* (Zone 3, Rosaceae family) has fan-shaped leaves that unfold accordion-style early in spring. The fresh-green cupped leaves are soft with a wavy toothed silver-touched edge and are covered with tiny hairs that capture and hold glistening pearls of rain after spring showers, one of my favorite ornamental features of the plant.

The foliage is usually 8-in. to 10-in. tall. In late spring clouds of tiny apetalous chartreuse flowers emerge and float above the foliage. The plant prefers well-drained sunny soil that never dries out too much, although I have it growing well in part- to very-shady areas and in soil that is wet all the time. Lady's mantle dislikes the heat and humidity of late summer and can be



Top: *Alchemilla mollis*. Bottom: *Alchemilla alpina*

photos by Richard L. Bitner



cut to the ground if the foliage turns ratty. It will refurbish itself with new foliage.

The plants can be divided almost every year if desired or allowed to fill in an area. They reseed in a gratifying way and will even appear in cracks between flagstones; they never become a nuisance. It's important to remove the spent flowers if self-seeding is not desired. The flowers can produce fertile seed without pollination. All offspring will be genetically identical to the parent plant. In areas where I use it for groundcover I do not remove the flowers and delight in the tiny elegant seedlings that appear the next season.

### Useful flower color for mixing

Since I love the chartreuse color of the flowers and consider it one of the best mixers in my garden, I plant it everywhere as a filler plant. It's effective as an edge-breaker along a brick path. It always seems to complement but never overwhelm its companions. I use it with any blue-green or blue-gray hostas, and with variegated liri-ope. I don't favor it with silver-gray foliage or bright gold-yellow flowers but find its bloom magical with the magenta flowers of *Silene armeria* and true geraniums or the clear orange dancing flowers of *Papaver atlanticum*. Among the current garden writers\* who specialize in perennials, Britain's Christopher Lloyd likes it combined with dark-leaved cultivars of *Cotinus coggygria*. West Coast writer Ann Lovejoy recommends interplanting it with species crocus and minor bulbs and letting its emerging foliage hide their ripening and withering foliage. Stephen Lacy likes to contrast it with the feathery foliage of rue and fennel as well as the sword-like foliage of iris and hemerocallis. And Margery Fish

### Annual Plant Dividend Gift Plants for PHS Members

Gardens throughout the Delaware Valley and beyond are populated with mature trees, shrubs, perennials, or houseplants that were once small gifts from the PHS Annual Plant Dividend. This annual event, a popular membership benefit, is a great opportunity to acquire unusual plants not readily available in nurseries or garden centers.

Each September an individual member can choose one free plant; all other categories of membership receive three. Plants donated in quantities of 15 or more are listed in the September *News*, but one- or two-of-a-kind treasures are also tucked in here and there.

PHS Annual Plant Dividend  
at our new headquarters  
100 N. 20th St.

(corner of 20th & Arch)  
Friday, September 6, 10am-7pm  
Saturday, September 7, 9:30am-noon

More information: (215) 988-8778  
Membership information:  
(215) 988-8776

says "I don't know any flower that is not improved by having *Alchemilla mollis* nearby."

### Use in arrangements

The sprays of chartreuse flowers dry well and are favorites among flower arrangers and wreathmakers. I select three large leaves to provide the "doily" base for

tussie-mussies hastily arranged for special guests.

### Freedom from pests

My plants have not been bothered by any insect pests and, *mirabile dictu*, I have never noticed my most troublesome pest, the deer, browse on them.

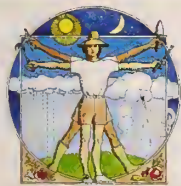
### Another Alchemilla

I also grow *Alchemilla alpina*, a more diminutive and perhaps more elegant form. It is seldom more than 4-in. to 6-in. tall and prefers a sunny spot. The bottom of the leaf is like a satin lining, which Gertrude Jekyll says "comes up and over the front edge of the leaf with a brightness that looks like polished silver against the dull green surface." It also produces small green flowers but seems to spread more slowly and does not self-seed, making it a great plant for the rock garden.

I obviously consider lady's mantle to be an exceptionally useful plant that deserves to be in everyone's garden. I've potted up several dozen to be offered at the plant dividend (see box). Since dozens of other PHS members are doing the same with their favorite plants I wonder what treasure I'll find for my garden.

\*Books on perennials by all of the garden writers mentioned in this article are available to members from the PHS Library.

Richard L. Bitner is a physician anesthesiologist and a teaching assistant in the Longwood Gardens Continuing Education Division. His country garden is in Lancaster County, Pa.



IN THE GARDEN

## Spiders & Mites & Everything Nice *Sometimes you can just leave them alone*



by Kathleen A. Mills

As a gardener I have always been aware of insects and the role they play in the life of my plants. Good bug or bad, insects are intrinsically a part of a plant's life.

Obsessed with aphids, grubs, mealy bugs and all those evil sorts, we fret over how to get rid of them. To be ecologically correct, how do I control their populations? IPM (Integrated Pest Management), population

monitoring, insect life cycles — the new peace time jargon for *seek and destroy*.

Recently I gained a new perspective on insects and their relationships with plants. In my four-year-old daughter's eyes our garden is a community planted with crops for insects to eat, and is a habitat for them to live in. Evidently we're not slum lords, our garden provides an ideal habitat. Bugs were everywhere!

Sarah and I sat in the kitchen staring at a praying mantis as it crawled up the window screen. Soon we were joined by the dog and then the cat, all just watching this other-world creature preen and prance after a good meal.

Crickets provided concerts each evening and grasshoppers played wonderful games of hide and seek. Lady bugs stopped to feast on aphids, then flew away home.

*continued*





Bagworms, plucked from an evergreen, joined in a slow-motion race up the fence-post before their organic demise.

Our favorites are the spiders. From the small fuzzy black ones to the largest golden corn spider of the season — almost 10 feet long according to Sarah — each one was an adventure. We stalked them through the garden, watched a web being carefully spun and a fly being caught for dinner. This is fun stuff!

Perspectives vary from person to person and from gardener to gardener, but a four-year-old has the right idea. She is blind to the destruction that lurks in the sucking mouth of an aphid or the voracious appetite of the tomato horn worm. She knows instinctively that the food chain starts in your own backyard.

#### ***Bt – Bacillus thuringiensis***

*Bt* is a bacterium that kills soft-bodied insects once ingested. It is highly selective and lasts only a few days, making it a wonderful weapon in the war on bugs. Available in dusts or sprays, *Bt* is sold under many brand names. Safe for use where there are children and pets.

#### **Mail Order Source**

Gardens Alive  
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Lawrenceburg, IN 47025  
812-537-8650

#### **Good Guys**

Name	Prey
Grasshoppers	Grasses, clover —prefer weeds to garden plants!
Lady bug	Aphids, scale, mites, mealy bugs
Praying mantis	Aphids, caterpillar, leafhoppers
Spiders	Just about any insect they can catch. Hunting spiders eat more than the ones that hang out in webs!

#### **Not So Good Guys**

Name	Control
Aphids	Strong jet of water, lady bugs
Bagworm	Hand picking, <i>Bt</i>
Mealy bugs	70% rubbing alcohol solution, lady bugs
Scale	Horticultural oil
Soft-bodied insects or caterpillars including: cut worms, tomato horn worm, gypsy moth	Hand pick, <i>Bt</i>

#### **Additional Reading**

The following books are available in the PHS Library:

*Bugs, Slugs & Other Thugs*, Rhonda Massingham Hart, Storey Communications, Inc., Pownal, VT, 1991.

*Kids Gardening*, Kevin Raftery and Kim Gilbert Raftery, Klutz Press, Palo Alto, CA, 1989.

*More Than Just a Flower Garden*, Dwight Kuhn, Silver Press, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1990.

*Natural Insect Control*, Warren Schultz, Editor, Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Inc., Brooklyn, NY, 1994.

Kathleen Mills is PHS Shows administrative manager.



# West Coast Bulbs for East Coast Gardens

*Some new choices for your fall plantings*

 by Patricia A. Taylor

With the increased interest in American flora, breeders and hybridizers are beginning to take a closer look at our bulbs (defined here as plants with underground food storage capacities). That's good news for western gardeners because the bulk of native bulbs entering commercial trade originate in the mountains and coastal ranges of the West. They are truly suited to gardens and landscapes in that part of our continent.

What about those of us in the East? That was one of the questions I asked myself while researching and writing *Easy Care Native Plants* (Henry Holt, N.Y., N.Y., Oct. 1996). I tried many West Coast bulbs in my Princeton, New Jersey, gardens and came up with wonderful selections that are good-looking, easy-care, and hardy. Grouped by a bloom period starting in mid-April and ending with a spectacular display in early July, recommendations are listed here.

I use neither fertilizers (aside from an annual dressing of composted leaves and humus) nor pesticides in my gardens. And all of these bulbs, unless noted otherwise, have flowered beautifully after surviving a minimum of the past three winters. These West Coast plants are truly East Coast survivors.

## *Early spring*

Since the Dutch bulb industry is mass producing the West Coast native 'Pagoda' (*Erythronium tuolumnense* 'Pagoda'), I suspect many *Green Scene* readers are familiar with its pale yellow, lily-shaped flowers. If you do not have this plant and have a shade setting, I urge you to try it. Its thick, glossy green leaves — usually marbled with dark streaks — emerge in late March and are followed two weeks later with the flowers on thin, but sturdy one-ft. stems. As clumps thicken with age, the stems produce greater numbers of flowers. After about five or six years, however, flowering is reduced — a sign that the bulbs should be divided. Nomenclature on this and several other bulbs reviewed here is a bit conflicting — just look for the name 'Pagoda' and you'll have the correct plant.



photo by Patricia A. Taylor

Two fritillarias pop up in succession just as 'Pagoda' finishes its bloom. I've had my failures with this genus and believe that the following two have survived not only because they are winter hardy in my area but also because I have planted them in well-drained settings. While neither is as dramatic as 'Pagoda,' both have a quiet charm in sunny or partly shaded areas.

To me, the checker lily (*F. lanceolata*,

The lovely yellow flowers of the *Erythronium* 'Pagoda' arise from handsome, marbled foliage.



## West Coast Bulbs for East Coast Gardens

photos by Patricia A. Taylor



**Top left:** 'Blue Danube,' a *Camassia cusickii* cultivar, stands out in borders in early May. **Top right:** 'Semiplena,' a *Camassia leichtlinii* selection, needs no staking and is unaffected by heavy downpours. **Bottom left:** When not planted among the roots of perennials, clumps of the *Brodiaea laxa* 'Queen Fabiola' form striking displays of blue flowers in early summer. **Bottom right:** Leopard lily (*L. pardalinum* 'Giganteum') is a striking presence in an early summer garden.



syn. *F. affinis*) is the American version of the European guinea hen flower (*F. meleagris*). Mine have a hatched purple and green covering on their bell-shaped flowers, which dangle two to four on a slim spike. While Brian Mathew and Philip Swindells assert in *The Complete Book of Bulbs* (Reader's Digest, Pleasantville, N.Y., 1994) that checker lilies can reach 40 inches, mine barely top out at 14 inches.

'Martha Roderick' (*F. biflora*, syn. *F. roderickii*) is a 5-in. little charmer. Next to the elegant checker lily, little Martha is a clumper with green leaves clustering to form a cup at the base of the sturdy stem. The top of that stem is packed with small flowers splashed with purple and edged in cream.

### Mid-spring

Camassias are elegant stars in borders at this time of year. Their numerous flowers are borne, for up to two weeks, on the top of strong spikes that need no staking. The last is an especially appreciated attribute after a heavy spring rain. Native to the Pacific Northwest, camassias have also captured the attention of the Dutch bulb industry and are now available in plentiful quantities. I have three and because they bloom in succession rather than all at once, I have spikes of these carefree flowers for almost a month in both sunny and partly shaded borders.

The first to flower, usually by May Day, is 'Blue Danube,' a *C. cusickii* cultivar. It reaches up to 30 inches and is supposed to be an excellent cut flower. It always looks so regal in the border, however, that I have yet to put it in an arrangement.

Next comes 'Alba,' a creamy white *C. leichtlinii* selection. The flower spikes on this species are 2 to 6 inches taller than those on *C. cusickii* and the leaves are slimmer. Otherwise, it is difficult to tell the two apart. 'Alba' flowers open in mid-May, just as the last petal shrivels on 'Blue Danube.'

As 'Alba' starts to wane, the double 'Semiplena' opens. Another *C. leichtlinii* selection, the flowers on this plant are striking — though neither as long-lasting or as numerous as those on the other two camassias.

### Late spring

The West Coast bulb presence is considerably more sedate in my garden in the three weeks following the camassia performance. The next three plants flower on top of thin stems and rarely grow more than 18 inches high. Since there is little or no

foliage, and since they all go dormant soon after their bloom period, I have them planted among the lush leaves of fringed bleeding hearts (*Dicentra eximia*) and celandine poppies (*Stylophorum diphyllum*). They would probably be more floriferous if I placed them in full sun rather than in the part shade where they are now.

The lovely one-leafed onion (*Allium unifolium*) has not only an unexciting popular name but also a false reputation as far as hardiness is concerned. I suspect these two factors are major deterrents to its being welcomed into East Coast gardens. Though many books say this plant is hardy only to Zone 8, its beautiful pink, long-lasting pompons\* have flowered for four years in my southern Zone 6 borders. And Brent Heath of The Daffodil Mart in Gloucester, Virginia, says the plants he sells are raised under Zone 5 conditions.

If temperatures cooperate — never a given as we gardeners know — ookow (*Dichelostemma congestum*) and white *Brodiaea* (*B. lactea*, syn. *B. hyacintha*) will start to open their flowers shortly after those on the pink allium appear. The former is a purplish blue and the latter is a gleaming white. Both last for up to two weeks in the border and are nice additions to arrangements.

The *Brodiaea*, by the way, are subject to nomenclatural contention and are often listed and sold as *Triteleia*. And ookow is sometimes identified as *Brodiaea pulchella*. If only these bulbs would acquire the popularity they deserve, I'm sure there would be more consistency in their identification.

### Early summer

The sky-blue flowers of 'Queen Fabiola,' a *Brodiaea laxa* cultivar, open in sunny situations just in time to greet summer. Since there is nothing particularly attractive about this plant's foliage (which goes dormant after flowering), I have placed it among the similarly tall 'Moonbeam' *Coreopsis*. The late June combination of sky blue and pale yellow is just lovely. In competing with the coreopsis roots, however, the 'Queen Fabiola' clumps do not get as thick as I have seen them elsewhere.

Since I am not a lily fancier, my great enthusiasm for leopard lily (*Lilium pardalinum* 'Giganteum') may be due to my ignorance about the genus. Its striking red and orange flowers open in late June to early July on top of stems reaching 6 to 8

\*Pompon — an ornamental ball-shaped head on flower.

feet. Dr. Joseph C. Halinar, a West Coast bulb breeder from whom I obtained my bulbs, told me they are short-lived on the East Coast. I thought them worth a try for one season at least and was rewarded with stunning flowers last year. In clearing my beds this spring, I noticed that not only did the bulbs survive in three different planting sites, but that they also increased. What a thrill.

In their home haunts along Pacific coastal ranges, these exceptionally prolific bulbs spread by a rhizomelike growth on which new bulbs form. *Wyman's Gardening Encyclopedia* reports a colony of 500 plants originating from just one bulb. What an extravaganza that would make. Given the humid heat of our summers, it is best to place these bulbs — as I did — in the coolness of part or bright shade. And make sure the soil is consistently moist — not waterlogged. I should note that my bulbs came back even though I was away for two weeks during last summer's drought.

I hope I've convinced you to introduce one or more West Coast bulbs into your gardens. All can be bought from the sources listed here and should be planted by the end of October. I think you'll enjoy their care-free beauty as much as I do.

### Sources

#### Lily bulbs:

Dr. Joseph C. Halinar  
2333 Crooked Finger Road  
Scotts Mills, OR 97375  
Catalog: 2 first-class stamps

#### All other bulbs can be obtained from:

The Daffodil Mart  
Gloucester, VA 23061  
800-255-2852  
Catalog: free

or

McClure & Zimmerman  
P.O. Box 368  
Friesland, WI 53935  
(414) 326-4220  
Catalog: free

The plants in this article are but a sample of the wonderful trees, shrubs, and flowers described in Patricia A. Taylor's book on *Easy Care Native Plants* (Henry Holt, N.Y., N.Y., to be released October, 1996).

# A COMPOST BASKET



by Gwynne Ormsby

Ever since my first basket at the Girl Scout Camp craft house, I have found great pleasure in weaving vines together to create a basket. My favorite baskets are made from things I must clean up from my garden, like grapevine, lavender stems, daylily and gladiolus leaves.

Making baskets led me to solve a problem many of us face. How do I compost when I live in town and garden on a postage stamp? It never quite made sense to me to relegate a compost pile to a hidden corner of the property. Then the most fertile soil, that underneath the compost pile, never grows anything. So I moved my compost pile to the middle of the garden and made it into a piece of garden sculpture: the compost basket.

Because I have a need to grow some vegetables, at the very least tomatoes, ruby swiss chard, lettuce, and broccoli, there are several spaces amongst the shrubs and perennials for annual plants . . . and for my current compost basket. These all rotate over the years.

I begin to build my new compost basket after frost, where there's lots of material to get the basket started (e.g. a tomato plant that just succumbed to frost). My favorite material for the basket warp is sunflower stalks.

I drive about seven sunflower stalks vertically into the ground along the circumference of a three-foot-diameter circle. I begin weaving in and out of these stalks the wads of dead tomato vines and whatever else needs to be cleaned up from the garden at that time.

If I need more height, I find more stiff, upright material, such as more sunflower stalks, flowering stalks from an ornamental grass, or water sprouts from the dwarf



In the wintertime and early spring when most of the garden is asleep, the compost basket is a sculptural element in the garden. During the growing season the basket will shrink dramatically as its contents quickly break down and as the lushness of the season closes in on it.

apple tree. I stick them vertically into the mass of woven material and the warp gets taller.

That basic structure is now ready for a winter of kitchen scraps and other garden waste as I continue to clean up the garden. If I have a little horse manure, I pitch that into the basket. If not, a shovel or two of garden soil adds the bacteria necessary to make the compost.

Throughout the winter and the next growing season I add to the basket, both to its outside structure and to the contents. When frost rolls around again, it's time to close up this basket and build the new

basket for the upcoming year. Through the winter and early spring the old basket sits enclosed in plastic and slowly works to build compost.

Around May 15 I tear down this old pile. When the plastic is removed, I have a heap of nice dark compost to spread around the garden. There's also some uncomposted debris, mostly from the outside structure. This either goes into the current compost basket or I chop it with my shovel to become mulch around the tomato or broccoli to be grown on the site. Whatever is planted on the site of the old basket is especially vigorous and healthy.

Last year I didn't get any sunflower plants, because they were all eaten by slugs. I had been wondering what I would use as a basic structure when I noticed the bayberry bush had shot up some tall branches that I didn't want on the plant. They were good warp material. One year my volunteer sunflowers grew in a nice little clump. After cutting out a few, the remaining stalks made a nice three-foot circle, a sturdy warp for that year's basket.

I've had a lot of fun decorating the compost basket with some dried allium heads, or a bunch of *Sedum* 'Autumn Joy' heads, or maybe the braid left over from my onion strand. Most years an errant hyacinth-bean vine finds its way to the basket and twines around a warp. The most fun, however, is hearing a visitor exclaim, "What a great compost pile!"



Gwynne Ormsby is the Horticulture coordinator at Melmark, a creative community for people with disabilities, and a teaching assistant at Longwood Gardens. The compost basket decorates her tiny garden in West Chester, Pa.

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photo provided by Ann L. Reed

Top: View of the backyard before the Reeds redesigned area and moved plants to other parts of the garden.

Bottom: (1995) With the encircling hedges removed, the one remaining pink dogwood became the focal point for the newly constructed, oval perennial garden. Replanted perennials had room to grow on naturally and best of all the whole garden could be seen and enjoyed from the house and terrace.

# RECYCLING IN THE GARDEN



by Marban M. Sparkman

photo by Ann L. Reed



*Thinning and deep pruning shrubs, dividing perennials, renewing soil, relocating plants to provide sun, all combined to help Ann and Frank Reed give a mature garden a new lease on life. Recycling helps to ensure the pleasure of a garden for generations to come.*

“**T**o everything there is a season. . .” and so it is with gardens; the seasons turn to years and the garden grows on through its maturity. Shade replaces sun, shrubs grow too thick or too thin, too tall or too compact, crowding each other out. Perennials become spindly, the soil grows weary and everything outgrows its original place. What to do?

Some would say it was time to start all over again, others might resort to the chain saw in desperation pruning. In the Delaware Valley, where azalea and dogwood, pieris and rhododendron abound, there is an option. Recycle. Revisit the plan, renew the soil, revive the plants, and move them to a new location in the garden. The hardy elder generations of these local staples will thrive on this regimen. Recycling is good horticultural practice; it gives a sense of continuity, and it insures that many old favorite varieties

will not disappear from our gardens.

In 1984, when Ann and Frank Reed moved from a woodsy, shaded backyard in New Jersey into a handsome older house in Mt. Airy, they were delighted at the prospect of finally having a “real garden with real sun.” They learned from the previous owner that the gardens had been designed in the mid-’50s. There was a wonderful allee of pink dogwood trees, a wealth of handsome English boxwood, a blueberry bush hedge, mounds of fairy roses, numerous sprawling azalea and rhododendron and a pond, only 10 feet from the back terrace, though they couldn’t see it. Best of all, they thought, were the four 15×15-ft. square flower beds, which looked particularly promising to the neophyte gardeners. They took up their gardening tools and went to work.

For 10 years they read books, sought advice, attended



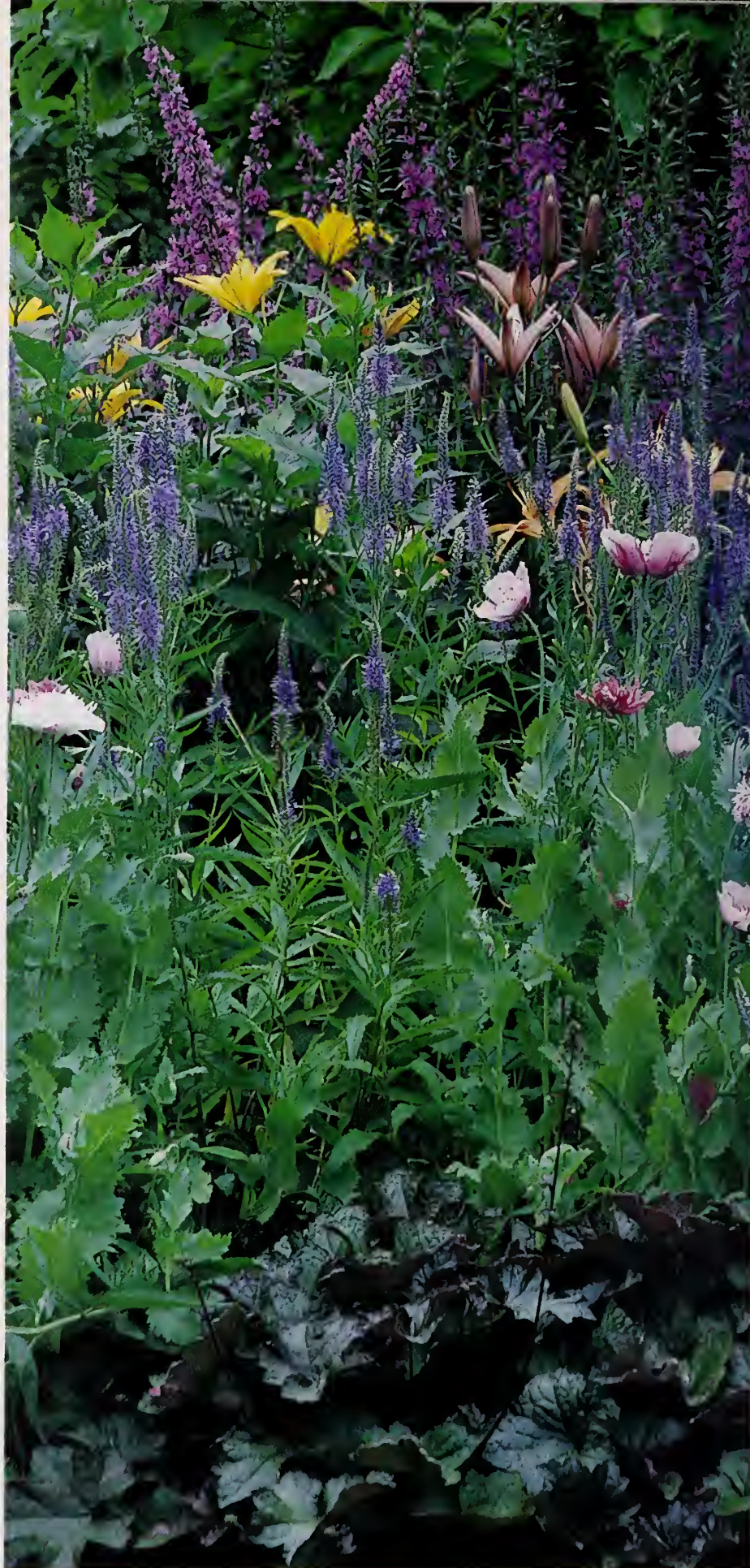
*"We did not want to lose these beautiful things that have worked so hard all these years." And so began the recycling of the Reeds' garden.*

courses, pruned, planted, and fertilized. Frank tried to keep the shrubbery at bay with the use of hedge shears, which created an unnatural lollipop effect and was a constant maintenance chore. Prune as he would, he could not keep the overgrown foundation planting from blocking the view from the house, and everything began to feel closed in. Meanwhile, Ann tried valiantly to garden within the confines of the 15×15-ft. squares but became increasingly annoyed with the results. The squares were thwarting her plan for a free-form English-style perennial garden. Surrounded by overgrown hedges of azaleas, high bush blueberries and roses in massive rows, the flower garden was cut off from the house and could only be seen from a second-floor window.

#### *Change precipitates recycling*

Finally the need to expand beyond the constraints of the original 15-ft. squares led Ann to seek a more permanent solution. She asked landscape architect Barbara Olejnik to come and give her a "start." What Barbara saw was not four squares but two acres, and she suggested that they begin by moving the overgrown foundation planting. Frank was skeptical, his response was "nobody has a house without foundation planting." Ann was pleased with the idea because "we did not want to lose these beautiful things that have worked so hard all these years." And so began the recycling of the Reeds' garden.

Working closely with the Reeds, Barbara Olejnik developed a plan and work was begun in the fall of 1993. The first step was to move some 75 shrubs to the perimeters of the property, creating a border than can be seen and enjoyed from the house. In the undulating border azaleas and rhododendron are free to grow on, unhampered by pruning shears, to provide privacy from the street in front and the neighbors in back. The painstaking task of digging, wrapping and replanting was placed in the hands of landscape contractor Craig Eberbach. This work proceeded through the spring of 1994. And then it was up to Ann and Frank to water, water, water through the long hot summers for the next two years to insure the success of their recycled shrubs. To



Close-up of perennial garden in June 1996. Recycling plants from another area in the garden gives this one-year-old garden its mature look.





Heavy foundation planting was moved to the edges of the backyard. The pieris was opened up to provide a vista of the pond (not seen here) and its newly pruned azalea border.

draw the newly planted roots down into the earth, they allowed a slow drip of water to seep into each planting hole over a period of several hours, every week.

The Reeds, with their respect for the plants that had come to that garden long before they did, saved everything except some overgrown yews, a wisteria too shaded to bloom that covered the front of the house and a pyracantha at the back of the house. The death knell for the pyracantha was sounded when Frank, while pruning it, carved his leg instead and landed in a nearby emergency ward seeking stitches. A scotch pine and a fir tree were badly diseased and had to be removed. Most of the original pink dogwoods were lost to disease. The sole remaining dogwood was carefully pruned and remains in place as the centerpiece of a new perennial garden. In their effort to recycle themselves, the dying dogwoods left behind numerous seedlings, which were dug and replanted with their many old friends at the property's edges.

By the fall of 1994, Ann was finally

ready to return her attention to the four 15×15-ft. squares, now visible from the house and ripe for revision. First to go were those constricting squares that reflected "a different time and a different kind of gardening." To accommodate Ann's preference for a "floppy look," an open oval border edged inside and out with brick was laid out under the remaining dogwood tree. And then the recycling began. Together Ann and Frank lifted 400 perennials, one by one, and heeled them into a specially prepared bed to spend the winter. Ann labeled each plant so that the tender sprouts and bare roots would be readily identifiable the following spring. The new beds were prepared and allowed to settle throughout the winter while the brick paths were installed.

In early spring they moved all 400 perennials, again, into their new bed. Now they could be planted in drifts with three or four of the same variety clumped together. Colors and textures could flow in a way that had not been possible in the confining squares. To encourage self-seeding and

allow the plants to grow together naturally, they left the ground unmulched. By recycling the perennials that she had tended so faithfully for the first 10 years, Ann had a fully mature perennial border within a year. It is a border with a history, bearing none of the hallmarks of a newly minted '90s garden.

### *Opening more vistas*

There remained only the issue of the illusive pond in the backyard. With the foundation planting removed it was possible to see out into the backyard to a thicket of azaleas and pieris where the pond was said to be hiding. Transplanting hardly seemed feasible and in any case it was an interesting feature, if only it could be tamed. Another recycling technique to give new life to the old shrubs was in order. Frank tackled the problem with his well-honed pruning skills. This time, however, his aim was not maintenance and survival, but rejuvenation. No more hedge clippers.

He "limbed up" an aged pieris and pruned it out so they could see through it





An overall view of the perennial garden in June 1996 from the backyard. The borders, reached and viewed from two sides, are easily maintained.

into a small emerging grotto. The newly bared, gnarled trunks of the stately old shrub added interest in themselves. Azaleas that loomed 6 ft. tall and wide were brought under control by pruning individual branches 3 to 4 ft. into the core of the shrub. Over a period of two years this technique not only reduced the outscale size of the shrubs but produced a more natural layered look. Some leggy rhododendron were heavily top pruned to encourage new growth from the base. And as the pruning progressed the outline of a long-forgotten rock garden and the pond began to emerge. The same "limbing up" that had been so successful on the piers was then applied to several nearby pine trees and the backyard began to take on a more youthful, airy look. Vistas were opened up, air circulation was improved and both plants and people were happier with the results.

Where once the house and terrace were shrouded in outscaled, overgrown foundation planting, now these invaluable mature specimens can be seen and enjoyed at the edge of the property. The renovated perennial border gives pleasure year-round, even in winter, when viewed from indoors. Judicious pruning of the trees and shrubs left in place has opened up vistas and provided new interest in the garden. And once the Reeds had completed all of this reshaping of the basic structures there was room to add new plants. Nooks and crannies among the older specimens were filled with new dwarf cultivars that will not soon

outgrow their place in the garden. Heaths and heathers have taken the place of sprawling roses. Ferns, european ginger and astilbe have filled in where foundation planting was removed from the front of the house. Fairy roses that once obscured the perennial garden now soften the fence rail along the street front.

A garden is never static and particularly not this one; Ann Reed proclaims, "the most fun of gardening is moving things

around." Frank is certain that they have created a low-maintenance garden. That remains to be seen. What they have managed with their recycling techniques is to create a garden with a respect for its own antecedents and excellent prospects for future growth.

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Marby Sparkman, a new contributor to *Green Scene*, has lived and gardened in the same place, outside of Philadelphia, for 27 years.

## An Invitation to Plant Societies

### SEND US YOUR PLANS FOR 1997

We will publish information about one major plant sale and one major event for each area plant society based in the Delaware Valley from March 1, 1997 through December 1997. Send the information to Erin Fournier (*Green Scene*, 100 N. 20th St., Phila., PA 19103-1495.) **Deadline: Dec. 1, 1996.** Please use the following format:

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The modern cultivar 'Satin 'N' Lace' (*Saintpaulia ionantha*) has ruffled edges and streaks of color. These types of blossoms are known as chimeras.

## Those Globetrotting Violets from Africa

by Art Wolk

*Anne and Frank Tinari were the first in the United States to devote their entire greenhouse operation to the commercial production of african violets.*

### The Tinaris: the local connection

My first experience with Anne and Frank Tinari came through watching the Delaware Valley's TV Garden Club with its cantankerous, but lovable, host, the late Roy Kersey. (They even named one of these cultivars after him in 1968.) He had them on the show many times back in the 1960s and '70s. But that was far from the beginning of the Tinaris' link with african violets.

Back in 1933, Frank Tinari was working at Jarrett Gardens in Bethayres, Pa., and was courting Anne. While her friends were being presented with cut orchids by their suitors, Frank persisted in bringing her african violet plants. Anne proceeded to kill one after the other because back in those days, florists told their customers that these plants came from the jungles of Africa and needed constant moisture and shade. So, Anne set the plants in water and kept the window curtains drawn.

Fortunately, while she was away from home for a couple of weeks, no one watered her violets or pulled the shades. When she returned, her plants were all in bloom or forming buds. The extra light and drier soil were the perfect growing conditions. The native plants in Africa grow in shaded, but bright light and well-drained soil.

By 1945, Anne and Frank, who were then married for 12 years, were ready to take a daring step. They had perfected the growing techniques for african violets and decided to become the first commercial greenhouse in the U.S. to grow this plant exclusively.

Luckily, that year Helen Van Pelt Wilson wrote an article for *Ladies Home Journal* about the care and culture of african violets. The article was so popular that separate pamphlets went into six printings. It did much to bring african violets to the atten-

tion of U.S. gardeners. Eventually, Wilson wrote six books on african violets\*, and she, along with an artist and photographer, gathered most of their material for the books at Tinari's greenhouses in Bethayres, Pennsylvania.

The Tinaris obtained many of the line of DuPont violets grown by Mrs. William DuPont in Wilmington, Delaware. These were known for their thick leaves and large blossoms. From their hybridization of these violets, the Tinaris got their first registered variety, 'America.' Finally, in 1945, Anne and Frank sent out their first catalog. It was only a postcard listing 25 varieties, but it was a start.

The next year, the African Violet Society of America (AVSA) was formed. AVSA not only had its own magazine and trained flower show judges, but would eventually be recognized by the International Committee for Nomenclature as the registration authority for *Saintpaulia*. The Tinaris were instrumental in the development of AVSA, and are both in its Hall of Fame.

Today, there are thousands of AVSA members from all over the globe, many of whom attend the National Conventions in the U.S. every year. The circle is really complete when members from Africa come to the convention and take samples of new cultivars back to the continent where these plants first became known over 100 years ago.

In 1947, the Tinaris pioneered the exhibition of african violets at the Philadelphia Flower Show, displaying 50 cultivars and receiving an Award of Merit. But it wasn't until the 1949 International Flower Show in New York City that they really

\*Two of which are available to members through the PHS Library: *African Violet*, Helen Van Pelt Wilson, M. Barrow & Co., Inc., N.Y., 1948 and *Helen Van Pelt Wilson's African Violet Book*, Hawthorn Books, Inc., N.Y., 1970.





The diminutive, enchanting *Saintpaulia ionantha*, discovered in 1892 by Baron Walter von Saint Paul in southeast Africa.



Anne and Frank Tinari's original cultivar 'America' photographed in 1950.

knew they were onto something big.

They set up an exhibit there of dozens of violets in a hollowed-out log, then went home to the Delaware Valley. A week later they returned to find that every violet had been stolen. It turned out that since there was nowhere to buy violets at the Show, their plants were pilfered. The only thing left was the log and an expensive Wedgwood bowl that had been a wedding present. The Tinaris figured that if people wanted these plants badly enough to steal them and leave the Wedgwood behind, people might actually pay for the plants if they were offered for sale. All that remained was to create more cultivars and to spread the word.

Over the years, the Tinaris have been responsible for doing a lot of both. After that 1949 Show they decided to expand their business. Since then, Frank has been responsible for getting over 400 of his cultivars registered, and many of them have been innovations. In 1966 he won an AVSA Commercial Cup for the best registered variety 'Fiesta Flame.' But Frank's favorite is 'Pink Cameo,' a flower that looks exactly like a delicate pink rose. In 1969, Frank became president of AVSA. Over the years, he's grown and shipped hundreds of thousands of his plants to satisfied customers.

In 1975 Anne wrote a book *Our African Violet Heritage*, which is still in print and has been instrumental in making an african violet stamp a reality. She's won eight silver cups for her plants and is widely recognized as the top authority on the growth and propagation of african violets. She wrote, the "Question and Answer" column for *African Violet Magazine* for 20 years.

Despite all their accomplishments, Anne and Frank Tinari remain the warmest and most unassuming people you'll ever meet.

### Growing african violets

The secret to success with african violets is not that complicated. Anne and many other growers have boiled down the basics into the "Ten Proper's."

## Discovery and Early Hybridization

To the natives of the Tanga region of Tanganyika (now Tanzania) the african violets were simply local wildflowers that had been growing for eons on the hillsides. To the botanical world at large, it was Governor of Tanganyika Baron Walter von Saint Paul in 1892 who brought this diminutive plant with small purple flowers to the world's attention. One version of the discovery has it that the Baron was walking with his fiancée along a stream on a lovely afternoon; he noticed the unknown wildflower and picked a few blooms to present to his future wife.

Regardless of how the actual discovery was made, Saint Paul did eventually ship seeds from these plants to his father, Ulrich, in Germany. The elder Saint Paul, a keen horticulturist, was taken with their delicate beauty and grew the first European specimens of these new plants. He ultimately brought them to his friend, Herman Wendland, director of the Royal Botanical Gardens in Herrenhausen, Germany.

Wendland recognized the uniqueness of these plants. He gave them the genus name *Saintpaulia* (after their discoverer) and the species name *ionantha*, which in Greek means 'with flowers like a violet.' Although the flowers are similar to the woodland violet, they are not related. African violets are in the Gesneriaceae (Gesneriad) family, whereas the common violet is in the Violaceae family.

Wendland was one of the judges at the Ghent Quinquennial Exhibition in the spring of 1893. As a judge, he couldn't enter the plant in the competition. But he did exhibit it as a botanical specimen, and it created a sensation. It was one of two plants named "Best New Introductions of the Show."

Wendland apparently made arrangements for the distribution of the plants with the Ernst Benary seed house of Erfurt, Germany. And it was this company that first started hybridizing and distribut-

ing the plant that many of the world's avid gardeners have welcomed into their homes.

The Benary Company offered a red-violet variety in 1898 as well as a white cultivar named 'Alba.' Other varieties were developed over time, and the company continued to offer african violets until 1951, when the firm was expropriated by the communists.

### African violets come to U.S.

The first african violets reached the U.S. in 1894 and came right here to Philadelphia, where W.K. Harris, a florist, received some from a shipment sent to New York. No one knows what eventually became of these first plants.

African violet breeding in America took a big leap forward when, in 1927, the Armacost and Royston Nursery of Los Angeles, California, obtained seed from Benary's in Germany and Sutton's in England. They did extensive breeding and in 1935 came out with 10 new cultivars. These were the cultivars from which the majority of modern violets are derived. The most popular was 'Blue Boy.'

Then, as often happens in the world of horticulture, luck played a role. In 1941, at the Utery Greenhouses in Springfield, Ohio, a mutation (sport) of 'Blue Boy' was found on the growing bench. Its leaves had a splotch of white where the petiole (or leaf stem) met the leaf, and it was named 'Blue Girl.' This opened up tremendous possibilities for breeding in leaf shape and color.

The following year, Frank Brockner of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, received a patent for a new pink-flowered variety called 'Pink Beauty.' And, Peter Ruggeri, in San Francisco, got the first patent for a white-flowered plant, named 'White Lady.' (Apparently, Benary's white 'Alba' had disappeared by this time.) These innovations vastly increased the colors attainable by african violet hybridizers.





Frank Tinari demonstrates his hybridization technique, which he has used to produce more than 400 registered hybrids.



Frank Tinari's favorite cultivar, the stunning, rose-like 'Pink Cameo.'

photos by Art Wolk

### Proper Cleaning

Dust and dirt on african violet leaves can lead not only to pest infestation and disease, but they reduce the amount of light absorbed by the plant for photosynthesis. Most growers use a gentle spray of tepid water to clean their plants. After spraying, it's important to keep the wet plant out of direct sunlight, since it can cause sunscald. It should also be kept away from drafts until the leaves are dry.

### Proper Exposure

This seems to be the biggest bugaboo among new african violet owners. I doubt if there's a single experienced grower out there who hasn't heard the question "Why won't my plants bloom?" Although other factors may play a role, lack of light is usually the main problem. Experts will tell you that plants need about 400- to 1000-foot-candles of light for at least 12 hours each day. But few novices actually measure exact light exposure.

Beginners usually start by growing plants on a windowsill. Which one? North, south, east, or west? If you have to choose just one, an east window is best since, even in the summer, they receive only the weaker rays of the morning sun. A north window is a good choice during the summer, when your plants will get about two hours of sunlight.

Many growers have had good results using a southern window in the winter months, when the sun is weaker. But be careful to move your plants to another window or use sheer curtains from the end of February until mid-November. A western window is also a good choice, depending on how much sun your plants receive during the warm months. Use sheer curtains if they receive more than two hours of sun during the summer.

While even serious growers continue using the windowsill, they get their best results by using fluorescent lights, usually units with two 48-in. tubes. Using this system, it's possible to get plants over 20-in. across containing dozens of blooms. You can purchase a simple unit inexpen-

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*The Tinari's returned to find that every violet had been stolen. It turned out that since there was nowhere to buy violets at the 1949 International Flower Show in New York City, their plants were pilfered. The only thing left was the log and an expensive Wedgewood bowl that had been a wedding present.*

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sively from a home supply center, or you can pay up to several hundred dollars for a four-tiered unit with wheels. Many growers start out by simply hanging a cheap shop light from the ceiling.

Fluorescent lights are so useful to growers because they spread light evenly, are relatively inexpensive to use, and don't burn hot like incandescent bulbs. In addition, fluorescent tubes last 10-20 times longer than an incandescent bulb.

Most growers use 48-in.-wide spectrum tubes, and grow their plants 6-12 in. below the tubes. These fluorescents do exactly what the name implies, they supply almost all the different wavelengths of light needed for maximum growth and bloom. If you use them 12 hours per day, you'll need to replace the tubes within a year. Some hobbyists write the date on the tubes when they're installed.

If you use fluorescent lights, clean the tubes regularly since dust can greatly reduce the amount of light that reaches plant leaves.

Regardless of your source of light, you should experiment for the best exposure for the specific plants you grow. For example, dark-leaved plants, those with dark blossoms or double (many-petaled) blossoms, and seedlings or young plants need more light. Lighter-blossomed plants and those with variegated or light-colored leaves need less light. The 'Optimara' and 'Ultra Violet' series of violets also prefer lower light levels.

If your african violets have spindly growth with long leaf stems (petioles) or if you get relatively few blooms, your plants

probably need more light. But if the leaves become yellowed or bleached, or if the center of the plants has a very tight cluster of leaves, your plants probably need less light.

### Proper Feeding

All the top growers use fertilizer on their plants. For mature plants, they generally use a mix high in phosphorous (the middle number in the listed N-P-K analysis). Typical examples are Peter's 12-36-14 and Miracle-Gro's 15-30-15. For very young plants, a fertilizer with higher nitrogen is beneficial, e.g. a 20-20-20 analysis.

Most growers use a constant feed of one-quarter strength fertilizer at every watering.

### Proper Humidity

Regardless of what plant you grow, it's best to simulate their native environment. With african violets, those conditions are a relative humidity of 70-90%. These levels can be particularly difficult for the home grower to achieve, especially in the winter when our homes are a desert-like 20%.

African violets, however, are adaptable plants and will grow well at humidity levels of 40-60%. Growers have used several techniques to increase humidity, including: grouping plants together, placing the pots on trays of wet pebbles (but being certain that the pot is above the water level), using a room or whole-house humidifier, and putting shower curtains around the entire fluorescent light unit.

### Proper Potting

African violets bloom best when they're root-bound. A good rule of thumb is to use a pot one-third the spread of the plant. If the plant measures 9-12 in. across, a 4-in. pot is fine. Even the huge 20-in. blue-ribbon plants are grown in 6-in. pots.

### Proper Soil

African violets like a growing medium that allows easy penetration of roots, water, and air, with minimal compaction. Although there may be as many potting mixes as there are expert growers, they all have





Judy Smith's *Saintpaulia* 'Fredette's Moonflower,' over 20-in. across, won Best-of-Show honors at the 1996 African Violet Society of Philadelphia Show.



*Saintpaulia velutina*, a gorgeous species that prefers cooler temperatures and lower light conditions, making it ideal for a north or northeast window.

one thing in common: porosity. The most common mixes combine sphagnum peat moss, vermiculite, and perlite. Most are balanced for pH (acid/base level) and have added fertilizer. (The ideal pH for african violets is approximately 6.4.) The Tinaris sell their own mix, which includes charcoal to absorb impurities.

#### Proper Space

Although we're tempted to crowd as many plants as possible into the growing area, it can cause problems. Overcrowding can reduce air flow, which leads to more fungal disease. In addition, reduced air flow means less available carbon dioxide, which the plants need for photosynthesis. Allow at least 2-3 in. of space between the leaves of neighboring plants.

#### Proper Spraying

Most growers grimace when asked about spraying for pests and disease. It's something they all hate to do, but have to do. To control mealy bugs, Kurt Eckard recommends using the systemic Bonide-Di-Syston year-round. Applied to the soil, it lasts about 12 weeks. He also occasionally uses Malathion and Safer's Insecticidal Soap for thrips. Most exhibitors use Funginex for fungal diseases; Benomyl leaves a white residue on the foliage. Expert Judy Smith has obtained good results by using *Ivory Liquid* for fungus (one tsp. per 16 oz. or 2½ tbsp. per gallon).

#### Proper Temperature

African violets grow best at a temperature range of 60-80°F. It's advantageous for plants to have a temperature drop at night to the low 60s. Research has shown that african violets produce more flowers, and that the flowers are larger and more intensely colored with this temperature drop.

#### Proper Watering

Growers fall into two camps, they either water from the top or from the bottom.

Kurt Eckard always waters from the top, and keeps water away from the foliage by using a turkey baster. He adds water until he sees it dripping out of the bottom of the pot. If you have your pots sitting in dishes, remove the excess water so the soil doesn't become sopping wet. Anne Tinaris says, "You only want the soil to be slightly moist to the touch." Let the soil dry somewhat between waterings.

Many other growers, like Judy Smith, achieve excellent results by using the "wick system," in which a wick is inserted into the potting soil. Wicks can be made of acrylic yarn, nylon hosiery, nylon fishing line, or other materials that conduct water, but don't rot. Pull the wick up through the soil, snip, and bury below the soil surface. The other end of the wick sits in water, which is conducted up to the pot by capillary action. Judy sets her pots on top of old food containers (e.g. "Cool Whip"), into which the wick is inserted.

Most growers using this system have the wick sitting in a one-quarter-strength dilute solution of fertilizer. Since salts from the fertilizer can reach high concentrations in the soil, it's important occasionally to water from the top to flush the salt. Be sure to water until it drips out of the bottom of the pot.

Whatever system you use, the water should be at room temperature. Most growers use tap water and let it stand for at least 12 hours so that the chlorine, which can be toxic, evaporates.

#### Two experts who exhibit at the Philadelphia Flower Show

Virtually every exhibitor at the Philadelphia Flower Show knows Kurt Eckard because of the volunteer work he's done helping people get their plants unloaded and into the Show. And anyone who's visited the Show over the past five years will also recognize his name, because invariably one sees a blue ribbon attached to his entry cards. Kurt is president of the African Violet Society of Philadelphia, and

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*In 1947, the Tinaris pioneered the exhibition of african violets at the Philadelphia Flower Show, displaying 50 cultivars and receiving an Award of Merit. But it wasn't until the 1949 International Flower Show in New York City that they really knew they were onto something big.*

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he's done as much as possible to make growing african violets into a science.

He bought his first plants in 1989 and entered the Flower Show for the first time in 1991, winning a blue ribbon. Like most exhibitors, that was all it took. He was hooked.

His Show plants go through a yearly regimen that can only be compared to an Olympic athlete's. He keeps blooms off the plants until six to eight weeks before the Show so every bit of light energy goes toward forming a huge plant.

He keeps his plants 10-12 in. away from the fluorescent lights. As Show time approaches, he increases the hours of light from 12 hours a day to 15. The increase doesn't come all at once, but is added in half-hour increments every two days. When he needs to add a new wide-spectrum fluorescent tube, he "breaks it in" by letting it burn in a separate unit, not over plants, for 45 days. Finally, it goes into a unit over his plants.

Kurt makes his own soil mix, which he pasteurizes and tests for pH using an electronic meter. He lets his water stand for a week to dechlorinate, then tests for pH and adjusts using vinegar. His growing techniques have yielded magnificent plants studded with dozens of flowers. They invariably impress even the toughest judges.

Judy Smith, another expert grower as well as a Flower Show judge, is different from the typical african violet enthusiast. Although she can appreciate a new cultivar with huge flowers or unique color, she's





Leaf cuttings placed in a rooting medium of half sand, half vermiculite is the method of propagation at Tinari's Greenhouses.



Kurt Eckard's 'Ultraviolet Burgundy,' won a blue ribbon at the 1996 Philadelphia Flower Show.

photos by Art Wolk

especially taken with the species because of the delicate beauty of their flowers and diversity of foliage.

To date, 20 *Saintpaulia* species have been found, all in the region southeast of Lake Victoria in both Kenya and Tanzania. Judy has 12 of the species and grows them under both fluorescent lights and in a bedroom window that faces northeast. She chairs the species committee of her club. And she makes sure that all 20 species are grown by the club as a whole.

Unlike Kurt Eckard, she uses the wick system for her plants. In addition, she leaves blossoms on her plants for much of the year, finding it unsatisfactory to just stare at leaves for 10 months.

She doesn't have a lot of space for her plants either, so as a new cultivar or species comes into her life, an old plant has to leave. Judy doesn't have the heart to pitch it into her compost pile, so she relies on friends with "black thumbs." It seems that her friends kill them off at just the right frequency, so she can always give them her discards. I suppose it makes them "horticultural hitmen."

Although not as detail-conscious as Kurt, her plants are just as impressive. I paid a visit to the 1996 African Violet Society of Philadelphia's Show, and she had won the Best-in-Show Award for a plant more than 20 in. across. Like many exhibitors, she probably notices the small imperfections in her plants more than their overall beauty. She told me about one plant she wasn't even going to take to a previous show, but which ended up winning a Best-in-Show Award. Her plants have also won blue ribbons at the Philadelphia Flower Show.

### A word of thanks

While attending the African Violet Society of Philadelphia's Show, I noticed a table that contained only *Saintpaulia* species. At first I considered them merely interesting, but after a few minutes of study, I began to appreciate their unique charm. Among these plants sat a *Saintpaulia*

### Where to Buy or Order African Violets

The Tinari's Greenhouses, 2325 Valley Road, P.O. Box 190, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0190 (Phone: 215-947-0144). Open Monday through Saturday 8am to 5pm; Sundays 1 to 5pm. Plants can also be mail ordered.

For african violet species, Judy Smith recommends Cape Cod Violetry owned by Jon and Barbara Cook, 28 Minot St., Falmouth, MA 02540 (Phone: 508-548-2798, call after 5pm).

### Clubs to Join:

The best places to learn about growing african violets are at african violet club meetings. Everyone is welcome to join, regardless of their level of expertise.

To join the African Violet Society of America, write to:

AVSA, Inc., 2375 North St., Beaumont, TX 77702.

### In Philadelphia and vicinity:

African Violet Society of Philadelphia, Contact: Margaret Cass (Phone: 215-836-5467).

### In Southern New Jersey there's the:

Burlington African Violet Club, Contact: Laural Brown (Phone: 609-877-8696).

### Books worth reading:

*Our African Violet Heritage: A Thirty Year Romance with African Violets*, Anne Tinari, Tinari Greenhouses, 1975, 83 pages, Cost: \$9.95.

*African Violets: Gifts from Nature*, Melvin J. Robey, Cornwall Books, 1988.

*ionantha*. I found its delicate beauty almost mesmerizing. It was easy for me to understand what made Baron von Saint Paul lean over to pick those few lovely wildflowers over 100 years ago.

Standing there, in a gymnasium in the Chestnut Hill section of Philadelphia, I realized that this room held most of the known history of this diminutive plant. Over the years, the hybridizers had created new flower colors that were frilled, doubled, or bi-colored, and had greatly increased the blossom size and number per plant. New foliage had been developed that was not only larger, but also variegated, serrated, ruffled, or pointed.

I couldn't help but think about how much had happened right here in the Delaware Valley, where some of the first plants arrived in 1894. But I especially thought about a man and woman, just a few miles away, who devoted their lives to this one plant.

We owe a lot to the great landscape architects and gardeners of the world who've enthralled us with outdoor displays every spring and summer. But to the Tinaris we owe just as much. They've beautified our homes with plants that have given us flowers year-round, and made our arrival at home something to be savored, no matter what the workday has dished out.

**Propagation:** If you'd like propagation tips, send a SASE to *Green Scene*, PHS, 100 N. 20th St., Phila., Pa. 19103-1495.

Art Wolk is president of the Horticultural Society of South Jersey; he lectures and writes on a variety of gardening topics. Art won the 1995 and 1996 Grand Sweepstakes Award at the Philadelphia Flower Show. He stands in awe of Kurt Eckard and Judy Smith. Among Art's blue ribbons, there are none for african violets.



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Gourd treasures: raw material ready, willing and able to pique the imagination. When you look at these shapes, it's easy to see how people through the ages have used the gourd for utility and art. For gourd sculpture, see page 8.  
photo by Ira Beckoff





# GREEN SCENE

THE PENNSYLVANIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY • Nov./Dec. 1996 \$2.75

*Creative Ways  
to Celebrate Your  
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See page 3







3.



14.

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**Front cover:** A holiday table setting — a fanciful representation of just a small part of the famous ornamental kitchen garden at Chateau de Villandry in the heart of Touraine, France. (Plant descriptions with photo on page 7). Here a small lead figurine of a French gentlewoman seems to have just emerged from a gravel path between the hedges styled from *Leptospermum*, usually seen in bloom at florists this time of year. Designer Nicholas Lapp used just the tiny leaves for appropriate scale.

photo by Tori Butt



*Grow with us.*

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Volume 25, Number 2 November/December 1996

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**Printer:** ALCOM Printing Group, Inc.

**The GREEN SCENE**, (USPS 955580), Volume 25, No. 2, published bimonthly, January, March, May, July, September, November, by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, a non-profit membership organization at 100 N. 20th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103. Subscription: \$12.95—Single Copy: \$2.75 (plus \$1.05 shipping). Second class postage paid at Philadelphia, PA 19103. • **POSTMASTER:** Send address change to THE GREEN SCENE, 100 N. 20th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103.

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**Green Scene subscriptions are part of the membership benefits for:**

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*the green scene / november 1996*



# *Creative Ways to Celebrate Your Holiday*

*Indoor Design Ideas for the Country and City*



*by Nicholas Lapp & Joseph Kerwin*

photo by Tom Hall



A country mantel is covered in fresh moss and ferns with lichens, mushrooms, *Sarracenia* (pitcher plant) and *Briza* (quaking grass). The illuminated logs offer no threat to the plants.





**Y**ou ran out of boxwood while covering the barn? And the snow is obliterating your santolina knot garden based on the 12 days of Christmas? Let's face it, holiday decorating has become an Olympic sport. Decorations appear in malls before Thanksgiving, outdoor lighting schemes need to be underwritten by utilities, even truckers get into it with wreaths attached to their grilles. It's inescapable (unless you leave for the Bahamas the day before Halloween and return for Valentine's Day), and it's big business. Our favorite holiday is January 6th, Twelfth Night, when all of this gets packed up but, since you asked, here are some creative ideas for stylishly surviving the nightmare fondly known as the "holiday season."

If you do choose to decorate, unplug the fax, plug in the lights and read on.

### **Country**

For this rustic apartment, the owner was having a few people over for one party and then was leaving on vacation. Decorations needed to be easy and disposable, a large tree was out of the question. A simple white mantel was covered in moss (on a bed of plastic wrap to protect the paint) and treated as a forest floor. Interesting mushrooms from the gourmet store combined with quail eggs, and lichens gathered from the woods, creates a pretty, natural and perfectly appropriate decor for the gardener residing here. Ferns were slipped out of pots and put in ziplock bags under the moss. No, it won't last for weeks — it's not meant to — but the mushrooms can be thrown in the freezer and sauteed later for a soup stock.

In place of the large tree the owner

usually undertakes, ornaments were massed by color and size in various bowls — an effective display and a time-saver. Potted ivies were used as a stand-in for the traditional holiday tree, but a small potted evergreen could have worked. (If kept in a sheltered area of the garden and mulched, it can be planted in the spring.)

Additionally, the picture frames are surrounded with greens. Cardboard borders were cut to fit around the frames and then covered with stapled-on galax and ivy leaves. Stay away from sap evergreens and berries since they'll stain the walls unless you carefully back the frames with felt. Other simple options for decorating would be clumps of votive candles in different colors on the mantel, a still-life of different apple varieties from the farmer's market, gingerbread people iced in a striking color



Quail eggs nest in a hollow of reindeer lichen. A small dried protea, tree fungi and dried *Sarracenia* emerge from a bed of moss and live fern plants.





photos by Tori Butt

5

Galax and ivy leaves surround antique fern prints while potted ivies enliven terra cotta pots, bowls and a windowbox along with a variety of antique glass ornaments.

(use the various paste food colorings available from baker's supply stores or use latex paint).

A row of tall water glasses alternating with small cordial or sherry glasses filled with different kinds of berries could be fun and modern — holly, cranberry, nandina, crabapple, pepperberry, chinaberry, juniper, privet, etc. You can challenge your garden friends to identify them. Don't feel restricted

by red and green either; with this simple white decor, blue spruce with juniper berries and all silver balls would have been great, or consider yellow conifers like golden arborvitae with variegated holly.

If you're a bird enthusiast, work with a decor that can go outside afterwards and provide food. Smear apples or pinecones with peanut butter and roll in seeds — one type per piece. Don't underestimate the pet

store or health food stores for materials you can buy in small quantities like sesame seeds, small grains, shelled sunflowers, dessicated coconut, golden raisins, etc. You can also find whole stalks of millet seeds meant for parakeet cages and work them into pine garlands so birds can perch, eat and, oh well . . . it's fertilizer.

*continued*





### City

Here, decorations needed to be more formal and lasting. The owner was having a series of parties, some small, others big and dressy and family was arriving for the week of Christmas. The brown living room would have swallowed up traditional red and green, while brown and violet looked great and was more sophisticated. Magnolia leaves and lotus pods are wired to a thick rope to form a steady garland with black-bearded wheat and yellow persimmons. Glass ornaments in deep brown, copper and violet provide sparkle. Southern *Magnolia grandiflora* dries slowly and has a

handsome brown hairy-textured underside. Consider also the various types of eucalyptus available in the winter, they can make stunning silvery garlands that look just about the same fresh or dry. *Do be careful, eucalyptus is even more flammable than pine* so it's best for an unused fireplace.

Continuing the formal style, the centerpiece is a miniature parterre based on the famous ornamental vegetable gardens of Villandry in France; miniature roses, orchids and gomphrena fill out the beds. A base of Oasis (the water-retaining florist's foam) on a waterproof tray keeps the clippings fresh. Scissors were used as clip-

pers afterwards to obtain the manicured clipped quality necessary.

The path in between is paved with gravel, but crushed glass or colored stones provide a colorful alternative. If you have children in the home, a parterre based on a maze (copy one from a book) would provide a witty and stylish centerpiece the kids could play with later. You can do a larger one on a cookie sheet or two, complete with tiny architecture model figures — great for Christmas breakfast. Tiny dollhouse furniture would be in scale as garden benches. The complexity of the design depends on

photo by Tori Butt





your patience — but even a simple one can look striking if you clip the tops afterwards to a uniform height. Small leaves or dense evergreens work best — boxwood, moss, juniper, miniature holly, etc.

## Plants

And lastly, for an instant and easy decor you can always rely on the season's potted plants. Christmas cactus, amaryllis, miniature orange trees, and kalanchoes are pretty and can be grown as house plants or given as gifts. Cyclamen are ideal if you're an ascetic or masochist and keep the house at 60°F. Kidding aside, they do well if you



photo by Toni Butt

Brown and copper glass ornaments echo the wall glazing and the beautiful indumentum on the underside of the magnolia leaves.

keep them in a window that's cool even in the day and keep water out of the crown.

Although author Truman Capote called poinsettias the Robert Goulet of the horticultural world, they're fun and make a big impact. Consider some of the newer colors and sizes. Just don't fool yourself that you'll get them to rebloom — it's not worth the effort when they're grown in such an amazing variety. Try some of the newer sizes and colors like 'Jingle Bells,' red with white dots, 'Pink Curly' with deeply puckered petals or 'Lemon Drop' a pale yellow great for blue interiors. Azaleas last if kept moist and can be grown year to year but, like florist hydrangeas, these are not the outdoor types so don't transplant them in the spring. Just remember that your house is dry and warm and plants covered with flowers can dry out daily if you don't monitor and water them.



We've given you some ideas, now go to it. Take a chance, experiment, and plan for NEXT year, too. If you have a garden, consider the winter months next spring at the nursery: red dogwood branches (*Cornus sibirica*); winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*); beauty berry (*Callicarpa*); hardy variegated ivy (*Hedera colchica* 'Sulphur Heart,' or any of the varieties of hydrangeas especially tree hydrangeas, which dry beautifully. Keep an eye out at flea markets for fabrics,



photo courtesy of Paul Ecke Ranch

A wide variety of new poinsettia forms can add pizzazz to holiday decor. Here's recently developed Jingle Bells 3 (Eckespoint®.)

containers and ornaments. In the summer, dry flowers and grasses for wreaths. Start early and pace yourself, it's easier.

If NASA succeeds, next year we'll know what evergreens are in fashion on Mars and maybe they don't shed!



Nicholas Lapp fled Virginia after seeing the decorations on the National Christmas tree and moved to New York for his MBA at Columbia (it stands for Make Better Arrangements). He's a florist/stylist living in Manhattan with a Welsh corgi amid many boxes of ornaments and lots of fire insurance.

Joe Kerwin is the manager of the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory of The New York Botanical Garden, which reopens May 1, 1997, after a 25 million dollar renovation. He is a city gardener who enjoys the holidays and, unlike Nicholas, believes that less is more. Except when it comes to Deruta pottery.

The miniature ornamental vegetable garden at Villandry, France, often referred to as the geometry of pleasure, sets a witty note for a festive table setting. Tiny *Leptospermum* twigs are wired into arches over beds of *Orostachys* (which looks like miniature kale). Pink serena roses from Italy and dried gomphrena heads provide color in a frame of asparagus fern edging and more leptospermum hedging. Glass ornaments (upper left) deck a double-globed topiary form taken indoors for the winter.





# Giving Orchids to the Novice



by Michael Howell

photos by Mary Lou Wolfe

8

Gilded leaves, training fig, a bottle of wine and Christmas ornaments enhance this gift of *Paphiopedalum* (lady slipper orchids).





*Orchids continue to gain popularity as potted houseplants and make great gifts for the gardener who has everything. If you're planning to give an orchid this holiday season, here are some tips for selection and presentation. But beware, orchids can be habit forming.*

**D**uring the holiday season, just a few years ago, I needed a gift — fast. The car, with impatient driver, was ready, and I was still searching for something to take to our friends who had invited us for dinner. This was our first visit to their home, and I wanted something special. Being an orchid grower, I had lots of phalaenopsis in flower. I grabbed a lovely white one, threw a bow on it and made a dash to the car.

Gary accepted the orchid and placed it in a prominent spot where it was enjoyed for many months. The moth orchid eventually quit blooming and was moved to a basement window. That spring, Gary read an article on phalaenopsis culture in *Southern Living* magazine. He watered the plant weekly and fed it with liquid fertilizer. In September, he watered his phalaenopsis with the prescribed epsom salts. He was rewarded a few months later with another spray of flowers. This scenario was repeated the following year and Gary began to get the itch.

He purchased two more phalaenopsis, trying different colors, and bought three books to learn more about orchid growing. The itch got worse, Gary scratched harder and today he has more than 30 orchid plants, including paphiopedilums, cattleyas and masdevallias; a plant room in his basement fitted with grow lights; and he is a member of the American Orchid Society.

My own orchid history started with a brief encounter at the 1974 Philadelphia Flower Show, where I bought a rather scraggly bareroot division of a cattleya. It didn't grow well and the orchid myths 'orchids are difficult and the plants are ugly when not in flower' certainly were true for me. I tried another at the 1977 Show and again in 1978. These were both potted plants, and one reflowered within the year. By the summer of 1980, I had acquired about a dozen and was invited to join the North Carolina Orchid Society. I was officially hooked. From windowsill growing to growing on friends' porches, under lights, in rented greenhouse spaces, polyhouses, etc., in North Carolina, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, I have graduated to a 2000-sq.-ft. 'state-of-the-art' greenhouse.

This stately *Oncidium colmanara* 'Wildcat' is ► presented with a bottle of holiday cheer and the Bromeliad *Neoregelia* 'First Prize.'

*the green scene / november 1996*







*Cattleya* (left), *Oncidium* (center) and *Angraecum* (white in foreground) shine in the author's greenhouse, a tropical garden setting.

**The key to successful orchid growing is success. Start with a healthy plant, give it what it needs and your needs will be fulfilled.**

The key to successful orchid growing is success. Start with a healthy plant, give it what it needs and your needs will be fulfilled.

An orchid plant is a generous gift. Many orchid plants such as *Phalaenopsis*, *Paphiopedilum*, *Dendrobium* and *Oncidium* can last in flower from several weeks to a few months. When selecting a plant, it's best to know the conditions in which that plant is to be grown.

Light, temperature and humidity are the key factors to be cognizant of when shopping for an orchid plant. Knowing what types of houseplants the recipient is successfully growing will provide you or the purveyor with hints. Also, note the light level in the home and typical household minimum temperatures (warm =68°F+, vs intermediate 60°-68°, or cool 60° or under). Know if a porch, greenhouse, or lights are to be used. Humidity can be increased by providing a humidity tray, a water-filled tray with a grate for the pot to sit on, or simply a saucer filled with water and pebbles.

Consider flower color and form. Though most people will find the multiflowered



The author holds a *Laelio cattleya* (C.G. Roebling 'Beechview') in his two-story tropical garden greenhouse.

inflorescences of *Phalaenopsis*, *Oncidium*, *Dendrobium* and *Cymbidium* to be very pleasing, novice orchid growers tend to really like or dislike *Paphiopedilum* (lady-slippers). Most hardcore gardeners and amateur horticulturists adore the lady-slipper orchid because of its unique form and resemblance to the wild lady-slippers, which are close to impossible to cultivate successfully in the garden. *Paphiopedilums* also have the advantage of being particularly long lasting in flower — a budded plant might take a few weeks to flower and then last up to three months in full bloom. The mottled leaf *paphiopedilums*, which make a lovely foliage specimen in time, will grow and flower well in most homes. The green solid leaf *paphiopedilums* generally require

cooler night temperatures of 60° or less to perform best. *Phalaenopsis* (pronounce Phal-la-nop-sis, there is no 'leon' in phalaenopsis) are probably the most popular gift because of their beauty, longevity and ease of culture — literally the gift that keeps on giving. *Phalaenopsis*, or moth orchids, can be grown successfully in most homes. They prefer bright indirect light and perform beautifully under grow lights. They thrive in typical house temperatures that do not drop below 65° even on cold winter nights. They come in white, yellows and many shades of pinky purple from 'near red' through light silvery pinks to darker lavender pinks. They come solid, blushed, spotted and/or striped and some are even fragrant, especially the yellows. *Phalaenopsis* are probably the best choices when you have no idea what kind of orchid to give, unless you're sure that the plant is going into a greenhouse or cool porch.

Another plant for bright warm homes is the evergreen *Dendrobium*. Though there are hundreds of species of *dendrobiums*, the modern hybrids that have been bred and grown for the 'pot plant' market are the best choices for the uninitiated. They will flower for up to three to four months, two months not being unusual. These plants have been bred to reach heights of 8 in. to 30 in. in full bloom and come in a very wide range of color and form.

*Oncidium* is another type of orchid that has gone through much hybridizing to





Any one of these fresh-cut orchid ornaments would add zip to a holiday gift: (left) a bicolor *Cattleya* and a *Doritis*; (right) *Dendrobium*.

### Creating an Orchid Ornament

While working at a local garden center several years ago, I used fresh-cut orchids on a Christmas tree. The tree was decorated with white lights, white german statice and white cattleya orchids. The cattleyas looked like doves 'lighting' in the branches. Holidays since I've used cut orchids on my own tree in hanging vase ornaments manufactured for that purpose. A few years ago, again looking for something fast and simple to give as a gift, I decided to make my own ornaments. I took a florist's water tube and taped a wire hook to it; filled the tube with cut orchids and greens and tied it off with ribbon. I've modified this idea several times since using orchids from plants that were no longer in exhibition condition but still had good quality flowers. This whole ornament, which can be hung from a tree or anywhere for that matter, makes a great accent for a gift package or can be secured with ribbon to a bottle of wine for an imaginative and personalized 'hostess gift.'

When using cut orchids, use a sharp sterilized knife or razor blade to remove the flower stem from the plant. Recut the stem under warm water. If the flowers wilt a bit, simply recut them under water and leave them to soak for 5-10 minutes. They will probably revive and last several more days. I've had cut orchids last up to two weeks in their tubes, recutting them each time they started to wilt. Make sure the florist tube or vase is sterile and the water fresh. This will add days to the life of your flowers.

M.B.



From top left, the orchids *Dendrobium*, *Cattleya* and *Phalaenopsis* are presented with pink *Cryptanthus* in gilded wire mesh baskets.



## Giving Orchids to the Novice

make it more user friendly. I grow thousands of orchid plants, including many obscure species and lovely 'prima donnas' who would just as soon wither and die if you look at them crosseyed. I really appreciate the 'meat and potato' oncidiums that I can count on to flower consistently, year after year, without much coddling. Two of my favorites for sheer reliability are *Oncidium Gower Ramsey* and *Oncidium Sharry Baby* 'Sweet Fragrance.' *Oncidium Sharry Baby* can be counted on to flower on each maturing growth, a full 6-in. pot giving you three to six flower spikes over the course of a year. The flowers are small and range from brownish red and white to a reddish mauve and white, bearing 25-75 flowers on a branched inflorescence and always being fragrant, hence its cultivar name 'Sweet Fragrance.' *Oncidium Gower Ramsey* and similar yellow oncidiums such as *Taka* and *Sweet Sugar* also flower consistently well on maturing growths, the bigger growths and pseudobulbs providing the most floriferous displays on branched inflorescences. *Onc. Gower Ramsey* and *Onc. Taka* may have inflorescences up to 30 in. to 36 in. in height with 30-60 flowers per inflorescence, while the more compact *Onc. Sweet Sugar* has fewer but larger flowers on a plant a half to a third of that size. For a greenhouse or cool porch there are many more choices that can be made from the *Oncidium* group.

*Cymbidium*, especially miniature *cymbidiums*, continue to sway the orchid fancier — but they are a bit less forgiving than those orchids mentioned previously. They

take up more space and require relatively brighter light and cooler temperatures. They only flower once a year, though they can also last from six to 10 weeks in flower. A greenhouse, cool porch or other more specialized growing area is best to grow these beauties well.

Some of the other orchid genera worth mentioning are the Vandaceous alliance, *Masdevallia* and *Cattleya*. They are not necessarily the first choice as gifts to novice orchid growers because in general they require more exacting growing conditions and they lack long-lasting flowers, though they are all very growable and will flower well given the appropriate conditions. It's worth noting that almost any orchid plant can be grown and flowered well by greatly modifying typical house conditions or providing a growth chamber or greenhouse. Again, these may not be realistic expectations for the novice orchidists with their first plants. When picking up or sending an orchid as a gift, be sure to ask for a care sheet to be included.

### Presenting the gift

Now that you've selected your orchid gift, consider the presentation. An orchid plant in itself is a substantial gift, but why not have some fun with it. You may do as little as slipping it into a clean clay pot (without disturbing the roots). Or, you can slip it into a painted plastic or clay pot, painted a solid color or simply 'gilded' with gold metallic spray paint. Or take the painted pot and hot glue gilded holly leaves or other holiday ornamentations (a la

### Area Orchid Vendors

Floral Design Gallery, Kimberton, Pa.  
(610) 933-2289

The Little Greenhouse, Baltimore, Md.  
(410) 661-4748

Parkside Orchid Nursery, Ottsville, Pa.  
(610) 847-8039

Penn Valley Orchids, Wynnwood, Pa.  
(610) 642-9822

Sentinel Orchids, Radnor, Pa.  
(610) 688-8528

Waldor Orchids, Linwood, N.J.  
(609) 927-4126

Waterloo Gardens, Devon & Exton, Pa.  
(610) 293-0800, 363-0800

### Two Major Orchid Events

The South Eastern Pennsylvania  
Orchid Society (SEPOS)  
presents

#### •SEPOS Annual Show and Sale

The Court Mall, King of Prussia, Pa.  
February 6-9, 1997  
(215) 635-3836

#### •SEPOS hosts the National Orchid Convention

The Eastern Orchid Congress and the  
American Orchid Society  
Show and Sale

Holiday Inn, King of Prussia, Pa.  
October 24-26, 1997  
(610) 582-9291

#### SEPOS regular meetings

Second Wednesday of month  
Freedoms Foundation, Valley Forge, Pa.  
For information call (610) 827-7445,  
(215) 635-3836

#### For information about Orchid groups in your area contact

American Orchid Society  
6000 South Olive Avenue  
West Palm Beach, FL 33405-4199  
Tel. (561) 585-8666  
Fax: (561) 585-0654  
e-mail: 71726-1741@compuserve-com

Martha Stewart).

You might make up a basket arrangement using the orchid as a focal point and adding a supporting cast, using a favorite wine, spirit, homemade holiday treat, or prepackaged gourmet item. You might even add other plants such as ferns, ivies or bromeliads. Try a rooted cutting or division of a plant for next year's garden, or some



A good reference book or a pair of garden pruners make great gifts for any gardener. The plant on the left is the fragrant orchid *Neostylis* 'Lou Sneary.'



## Culture and Selection

	Bright/ Indirect Light	Artificial Light (Gro-Lights)	Bright Min. of 4 hours Direct	Night Temp. 63-68°F Days + 5-10°	Night Temp. 56-63°F Days + 5-10°	Night Temp. Under 55°F Days + 5-10°
Ascocenda/Vanda		X	X	X		
Cattleya		X	X		X	X
Cymbidium			X		X	X
Dendrobium		X	X	X	X	
Masdevallia	X	X			X	X
Oncidium		X	X		X	X
Paphiopedilum	X	X			X	X
Phalaenopsis	X	X		X		

packets of seed. An orchid care book or culture sheet is always appreciated. Other additions might be a bag of orchid mix, pot hangers, pot clips, or garden tools such as pruners. The basket can be one you buy for the occasion, or simply recycle one of your own. You can spray paint the basket to match the blend of flower color or simply gild it gold. Holiday bags with the inflorescences poking out the top can be effective — especially if the plant has been stabilized with crumpled newspaper covered with tissue paper for the occasion. Baskets or holiday tins can be lined with a pretty fabric or tulle. A wired ribbon bow makes a great accent, especially with a holiday ornament tied at its center. Sheer wired ribbon provides a most elegant touch with orchids. Spanish or sheet moss can be used for a more natural display, augmented with live ferns and ivy or dried fungi hot glued into place. A word of caution — do not include flowering orchids with fresh fruit — as the ripening fruit may cause the

### Fragrant Orchids

Did you know that many orchids are fragrant? Several of the commonly cultivated cattleya hybrids are strongly perfumed, while some members of the *Phalaenopsis*, *Dendrobium*, *Oncidium* and *Vanda* tribes are lightly fragrant. The strongest and most intense fragrances, ranging from chocolate and coconut to lemon and vanilla, come from many of the thirty thousand orchid species.

orchid flower to collapse prematurely.

When travelling with your living gift — remember to protect it from prolonged stays in a cold or hot automobile. Traveling to or from the car can be done without risk if the temperature is above freezing with little wind. Temperatures below freezing, with wind, may damage the flowers considerably. Loosely wrapping the entire

inflorescence with tissue paper will protect the flowers except in the most extreme conditions. Remember to warm the car before you put your gift inside.

Have a happy holiday season and remember, though orchids can be habit forming, they're one addiction that remains socially acceptable!

Michael Bowell, a frequent lecturer and writer on topics from garden design to orchid growing, has exhibited orchids for several years at the Philadelphia Flower Show, Harvest Show and SEPOS Show. His awards for horticulture and artistic design include many blue ribbons, bronze medals, and AOS Show trophies including a 'Best in Show' in the 1996 Philadelphia Flower Show for the exhibit 'Orchid Madness.' His new shop, Floral Design Gallery, located in the village of Kimberton, Pa., specializes in orchid plants, fine crafts, and gifts for the home and garden.

Telephone (610) 933-2289 for directions and further information.

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# Horticultural Holiday

Explore the Offerings of the Delaware Valley this Winter Season



by Lauri Brunton



Rockwood Museum's lavish Victorian Christmas exhibit includes for plant enthusiasts a tour of a renovated Victorian conservatory.

A couple of years back my sister and I hopped a train humming to Handel's *Messiah*, an oratorio we assured each other we knew by heart having "sung-along" each year while decorating our own Christmas tree. We were on our way to a formal sing-along of this work.

Arriving late at the church, we found the choir leader attempting to lead the good-hearted souls through Handel's intricately composed harmonies; his hand gestures were desperate, his facial expression a strange mixture of enthusiasm and pained distaste. The wonderful acoustics in the church were ringing with cracking sopranos, rumbling basses and an array of unidentifiable voice parts.

It was not long before tears of silent laughter streaming down our cheeks made it impossible to continue the facade of "singing-along," but we were full of wonder at the perseverance of those still in the church. It was wonderful and magical to see the unflagging will of people gathered together in song to celebrate the season.

Our search for beautiful and unique celebrations, thankfully, did not end there. And, as I gathered material for this year's "Horticulturally Happy Holiday" listing of events throughout the Delaware Valley, I found myself salivating over the prospects more than once. Each event seems special and surely an adventure of some sort. Whether it's travel through time into decorated Victorian houses, productions of

long-loved Christmas plays, or visits to area arboreta for tours of winter plants, this year's round-up of events promises to unfurl the magic of the holiday season.

It's not been easy to arrange my calendar to pack as many trips to the area's attractions as possible. A trip to Winterthur for a Victorian breakfast with Santa and a Yuletide treasure hunt is recommended for children, but a friend and I are anxious to go and must locate a couple of kids to bring along as our alibi. Of course, the kids are welcome to have breakfast too.

We hope you'll enjoy this holiday's selection of goings-on as much as I enjoyed putting it all together for you. Merry touring!



# Bonanza

Photo courtesy of Hagley Museum & Library



Photo courtesy of Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library

At left: Hagley Museum & Library; visitors to the 1803 du Pont family home [Eleutherian Mills] will see the dining room table set for a Twelfth Night celebration. At right: Dried flower tree — Yuletide at Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library.

**Awbury Arboretum**  
**Francis Cope House**  
 One Awbury Road  
 Philadelphia, PA 19138  
 (215) 849-2855

Victorian Tea Party. Sip tea and munch on refreshments in the parlors of the Historic Francis Cope House (1860) amidst colorful holiday decorations and musical entertainment. The cost of tickets support Awbury's environmental education program.

December 13, 14, & 15  
 12/13: 5:30 pm  
 12/14 & 15: 2:00 & 4:00 pm

Contact Ken Lehr (215) 849-2855 for ticket information.

**Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve**  
 Washington Crossing Historic Park  
 Rte. 32 (2.5 miles south of New Hope)  
 New Hope, PA 18938  
 (215) 862-2924

Exhibit Preview and reception. Celtic

harpist Joanne Mell will entertain guests with seasonal music from 2:00 until 3:00 followed by English dancers from 3:00 until 3:30, and a slide show of the Preserves from 3:30 until 4:30.

December 8  
 2:00-4:00 pm  
 No admission charge

Native trees display: Indoors a tree festooned with all natural ornaments; outdoors a tree decorated to attract birds. Natural ornaments and potted white pines are for sale (\$8.00).

December 8-31  
 No admission charge

**Brandywine River Museum**  
 US Rte. 1  
 Chadds Ford, PA 19317  
 (610) 388-2700

A Brandywine Christmas Returns to Chadds Ford. This year's magical display is highlighted by a special exhibition: "A Most Popular Gift: Noah's Ark Toys"

featuring toy arks and animals carved from wood by craftsmen in southern Germany from the mid-18th through early 20th centuries. Returning to the museum are Ann Wyeth McCoy's antique doll collection, a rare Victorian dollhouse and the extremely popular "critter" ornaments. The museum's second floor gallery filled with working O-gauge model trains, including passenger trains, the French high speed *Le Capotole*, and a 60-car freight train are a Must-See.

November 29-January 5, 1997

9:30-4:30 pm daily (Closed Christmas Day.)

Adults: \$5.00; Seniors, Students with I.D. and Children ages 6-12: \$2.50; Children under 6: Free

"Christmas Shops." A variety of regional crafts are on view and for sale in the museum courtyard. Weekends only.

November 29-December 30 (Closed Christmas Day.)

Admissions same as above

"Annual Critter Sale." Handcrafted critter ornaments detailed by museum volunteers are offered for sale in the main lecture room.

December 7, 9:30-4:30 pm

December 8, 9:30-2:00 pm

No admission charge

**Fairmount Park House Tours**  
**Park House Guides Office**  
**Philadelphia Museum of Art**  
 P.O. Box 7646  
 Philadelphia, PA 19101  
 (215) 684-7926

Park House Christmas Tours. "A Christmas Party" appears in each of the eight 18th century houses including: A 'Sledding Party' at Cedar Grove and A 'Christmas Tea' at Strawberry Mansion. Houses are decorated by Philadelphia-area garden clubs.

December 6-December 11

10:00-5:00 pm. Last admission at 4:45 pm.

Members: Adults: \$11.00; Children under 12: \$3; Non-members: Adults: \$12.00; Children under 12: \$5.00. Tickets may be purchased on day of tour at each Park House, at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and at the Horticulture Center. Advance sale tickets on sale at the Philadelphia Museum of Art beginning in early November, or by mail order.

Special Holiday Candlelight Tours. Here is



# Horticultural Holiday Bonanza

a chance to see three historic houses in Fairmount lighted as they were in the 18th and 19th centuries. A Park House guide will accompany each group on a trolley. Trolleys leave from the Horticultural Center in Fairmount Park.

December 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, and 11.

5:30-9:00 pm

Members: \$30.00; Non-members: \$35.00

Reservations required. Must be purchased in advance by mail order.

Phone (215) 684-7926

## Four Lanes End Garden Club

(Langhorne area)

Contact: Ms. Carmela Verderame

(215) 757-7492

"Four Lanes End Garden Club 37th annual Holiday House Tour & Tea" features a self-guided tour of holiday decorated homes and churches, and a formal tea at Attleboro Retirement Home. Craft fair.

November 21

11:00-8:30 pm

\$8.00; \$7.00 advance sale. Tickets can be purchased in advance at the Langhorne Drugstore, 106 South Bellevue Avenue in Langhorne, Pa.

## Hagley Museum & Library

Rte. 100 at Rte. 141

(entrance at Rte. 141)

Wilmington, DE 19806

(302) 658-2400

Christmas at Eleutherian Mills. The 1803 Georgian-style estate E.I. du Pont built for his family will be trimmed for the holidays in a style reminiscent of the 19th century. The decorations will include a special Twelfth Night dessert service in the family dining room.

November 29-January 1

9:30-4:30 pm daily

Adults: \$9.75; Seniors and Students: \$7.50;

Children 6-14: \$3.50; Under 6: Free.

The Holidays at Henry Clay Mill will feature two special exhibits this year: A newly expanded version of Hagley's historical HO-scale model railroad diorama; and "A Man's Toys," a collection of objects garnered over time including pipes, cannons, chess sets, and more.

November 29-January 1

9:30-4:30 pm daily

Admission for Henry Clay Mill activities only is Adults: \$4.00; Children 6-14: \$2.00; Under 6: Free.

Toy Trains How-To Workshops. Hagley's Model Railroaders will be available to

discuss ways to select, assemble, and maintain a toy train.

December 14 & 15

11:00-3:00 pm

Free with admission to the Museum

## Historic Annapolis Foundation

18 Pinkney Street

Annapolis, MD 21401-1793

(410) 267-7619

Annapolis by Candlelight. This event will feature private and historic homes within the historic district of Maryland's capital city, showing a variety of styles as they have been adapted to this century. Participants, using a keyed map will tour the 12 to 15 private homes on Prince George and King Streets, and Maryland and College avenues at their own pace.

November 1 & 2

5:00-9:00 pm

Advance reservations with payment by October 25: \$22.50; HAF members: \$20.00; \$25.00 after October 25.

Group discounts for 10 or more available with advance reservations only and with payment by October 25: \$20.00.

Both nights with advance reservations and payment by October 25: \$36.00; (HAF members: \$32.00); \$40.00 after October 25.

## Historic Bartram's Garden

54th Street & Lindbergh Blvd.

Philadelphia, PA 19143

(215) 729-5281

Holiday Open House and Greens Sale.

Tour John Bartram's historic house by candlelight with a costumed guide; hearth cooking demonstrations, children's seasonal nature crafts making, sale of garlands, greens, gifts and more. Refreshments will be served.

December 7 & 8

10:00-4:00 pm

No admission charge

## Historic Fallsington, Inc.

4 Yardley Avenue

Fallsington, PA 19054

(215) 295-6567

All are welcome to attend the annual, old-fashioned tree lighting and Christmas caroling ceremony. Gather on the green of the Stage-coach Tavern situated on historic Meetinghouse Square in Fallsington. Refreshments will be served.

December 8

6:00 pm

No admission charge

## Historic Houses of Odessa

P.O. Box 507

Odessa, DE 19730

(Off Rte. 13, midway between Wilmington and Dover, De.)

(302) 378-4069

"Yuletide in Odessa." Each year, one of Odessa's four houses is decorated for the season with scenes inspired by a Victorian children's book. The tour theme this year is Frances Hodgson Burnett's "Little Lord Fauntleroy."

November 26-December 31

Tues.-Sat. 10:00-4:00 pm; Sun. 1:00-4:00 pm

General Admission: Adults: \$7.00; Seniors, Groups and Students: \$6.00; Children age 5-11: \$3.00; Age 4 and under: Free

## Historic Grange Estate

Myrtle Avenue and Warwick Roads

Havertown, PA 19083

(610) 446-4958

Ongoing: Annual Christmas Festival. Mansion decorated in holiday splendor with five theme trees.

Annual Christmas Festival Party

December 7

3:00-5:00 pm

\$10.00; Reservations required

Tour of the mansion. Light refreshments served.

December 7 & 8; November 14, 15, 21, & 22

1:00-4:00 pm

Cost of admission

## Historic Yellow Springs

Art School Road

P.O. Box 62

Chester Springs, PA 19425

(610) 827-7414

"Christmas in the Village." Escape the shopping malls and relive Christmas of the olden days; traditional Holiday carolers; Father Christmas, and original crafts throughout the decorated village of Yellow Springs. Holiday refreshments will be served.

December 6 & 7

No admission charge

## The Horticulture Center

Horticultural Drive

W. Fairmount Park

Philadelphia, PA 19131

(215) 685-0096

Poinsettia display in Greenhouses; holiday gift shop and cafe.

December 6-December 11

Donation: \$2.00





**Top left:** Brandywine River Museum: a Philadelphia Mummers critter. Each year these critters made from natural ornaments steal the show from the many other exciting holiday features. **Top right:** Longwood Gardens — walk out of the Conservatory after dusk and see the hills lit with 400,000 dazzling multicolored lights. **Bottom:** Sweetbriar, one of the eight 18th century houses on the Fairmount Park Christmas House Tour.

"The Christmas Carol." Performances by the Hedgerow Theater at Memorial Hall. Sponsored by the Fairmount Park Council for Historic sites.  
December 26-January 5  
Call for times and ticket cost.

**Longwood Gardens**  
Kennett Square, PA 19348  
(610) 388-1000 X442

Christmas at Longwood. Elements of time and the seasons mark the holiday hours inside the Conservatory now fully opened after two years of renovations. Thousands of brilliant poinsettias, towering evergreens and fragrant white narcissi fill the Orangery and Exhibition Hall. Ballroom concerts include afternoon organ sing-alongs, evening organ concerts, and performances by area choral troupes. After dark, the Open Air Theater fountains reflect the colors of 400,000 lights shimmering in Longwood's outdoor gardens.

November 28-January 5  
Outdoor gardens open at 9:00 am-9:00 pm; conservatory opens at 10:00 am - 9:00 pm.  
Adults: \$10.00; (\$6.00, Tuesdays); Ages 16-20: \$6.00; Children 6-16: \$2.00; Under 6: Free.

**Lewis W. Barton at Medford Leas**  
Medford Leas Continuing Care Retirement Community  
Rte. 70, (1/4 mile east of Rte. 541)  
Medford, NJ 08055  
(609) 654-3009

On Display: A gingerbread village made by staff and residents of Medford Leas Continuing Care Retirement Community.  
December 5-January 2  
9:00-7:00 pm  
No admission charge

Create a special memory. A Holiday Gingerbread House Decorating Workshop will feature decorating techniques for a pre-assembled gingerbread house. All decorating materials, written instructions, and recipes provided. Completed houses can be taken home. Light refreshments served.

December 14  
2:00-4:30 pm  
Medford Leas Coffee Shop  
Same address  
\$12.00

**Newtown Historic Association**  
P.O. Box 303  
Newtown, PA 18940  
(215) 968-4004

"A Country Christmas House Tour"; 32nd annual tour features self-guided tours of five period homes, four of which have never been open to the public, and three



# Horticultural Holiday Bonanza

public buildings decorated for the holidays. Quilt exhibit at the Presbyterian Church in Newtown

December 7

10:00–5:00 pm

\$12.00; Groups of ten or more are discounted. Must use free bus service to all homes.

**Rockwood Museum**  
610 Shipley Road  
Wilmington, DE 19809  
(302) 761-4340

“Christmas 1896 at Rockwood: Toys for Boys and a Christmas Engagement” are the focus of this lavish Victorian Christmas display. The 100-year anniversary of the 1896 engagement party given by the Bringhursts to their youngest daughter Edith; gifts for young Edward Bringhurst including lead toy soldiers, cast iron toys and other games will be on display.

Tours will be offered Tuesday through Sunday 11:00 am–3:00 pm. Wednesdays: extended hours and evening tours until 7:00 pm.

November 26–January 5

Adults: \$6.99; Seniors: \$5.00; Children: \$2.00; Under 5: free.

**Annual Christmas Play:** The Bringhurst Family Players will weave the storyline through the decorated museum leading visitors on an enchanted evening time travel. Homemade refreshments will follow.

December 12, 13, 14, 6:00–9:00 pm

December 15, 3:30–7:00 pm

\$10.00; reservations are required.

**The Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College**  
500 College Avenue  
Swarthmore, PA 19081  
(610) 328-8025

**Workshop: “How to make Green Wreaths.”**  
Participants will make a festive unique wreath with a variety of fresh needle greens and hollies. Bring pruners; Scott supplies everything else.

Session A: Wed. December 4, 7:00–9:00 pm

Session B: Thurs. December 5, 10:00–Noon

Session C: Sat. December 7, 10:00–Noon  
Fee: \$25.00

**Plants with Winter Interest:** A guided tour featuring plants that make the winter landscape and plants that can be used for holiday decorations.

Sunday, December 1

1:00–3:00 pm

No admission charge

**Temple University Ambler Campus**  
580 Meetinghouse Road  
Ambler, PA 19002  
(215) 283-1304

Festive workshops and non-credit courses with Priscilla Shaffer. Making Wreaths: Create a wreath on an 18-in. frame, prepare greens to prevent “needle drop” and keep the wreaths looking healthy throughout the holiday season.

November 26

7:00–9:30 pm

\$45.00

photo courtesy of Scott Arboretum



photos courtesy of Historic Bartram's Garden



**At left:** The Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College winter landscape glitters for the casual visitor as well as offers materials for holiday workshop participants. **Top right:** Shoppers browse through the wide variety of holiday greens piled high in the brick barnyard during Historic Bartram's Garden annual greens sale. Selection includes spruce, fir, pine, boxwood, cedar, holly and magnolia leaves. The sale benefits America's oldest botanical garden. **Bottom right:** A window in the Coach House at Historic Bartram's Garden decorated for the season with nature's bounty, including pine boughs, magnolia leaves and mayapples. The Coach House is open for hot cider and other refreshments during the Garden's annual holiday open house.



Handcrafted Table-Top Holiday Trees:  
Learn how to make table-top trees, a perfect solution for Christmas decorating where space is limited. Unique gifts for friends and families.

December 5  
7:00-9:30 pm  
\$45.00

**Tyler Arboretum**  
515 Painter Road  
Media, PA 19063

Tyler Arboretum will offer a series of activities that emphasize the character of this holiday season. Activities will include a holly display, holiday wreath and centerpiece workshops as well as holly and Christmas tree rambles. The historic buildings, Lachford Hall and Painter Library, will be decorated in the Victorian tradition and will open on the weekends.

December 14-December 22  
Call for more information

**Washington Crossing Historic Park**  
P.O. Box 103  
Washington Crossing, PA  
(215) 493-4076

Candlelight Christmas Tour and Annual Tree Lighting accompanied by The Bucks County Children's Choir, Mercer County Symphony, and the Doylestown Dance Theater.

November 30  
3:00-9:00 pm  
Adults: \$5.00; Children: \$3.00

**Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library**  
Winterthur, DE 19735  
(6 miles northwest of Wilmington and I-95)  
(302) 888-4600

"Breakfast with Santa": Children can enjoy a delicious buffet breakfast, visit with a Victorian Santa, make a tree ornament and go on a Yuletide gallery hunt.

November 30, December 7, 14, 21  
9:00-11:00 am (Breakfast 9-10:00, activities 9:30-11:00)  
Adults: \$13.00; Children 2-12: \$9.00; Members: \$11.00

"Yuletide at Winterthur": For this annual tour, more than 20 rooms are decorated to recreate the winter holiday celebrations of the 18th and 19th centuries. All scenes on the tour are documented through diaries, prints, correspondence, paintings and books.

November 13-January 12  
Tours leave every few minutes starting at 10:00 am, Monday-Saturday and Noon on Sunday. Last tour departs at 4:00 pm. \$5.00 in addition to general admission, which costs \$8.00 for Adults; \$6.00

### **Choose and Cut Your Own Christmas Trees.**

**For tree farm or nursery nearest you contact:**

#### **Connecticut:**

The Connecticut Christmas Tree Growers' Association  
John Olden, Executive Secretary  
RFD1, Box 329  
Voluntown, CT 06384  
(203) 376-2370

#### **Delaware:**

Delaware Christmas Tree Growers' Association  
Richard Schauer, Executive Secretary  
1231 Dexter Corner Road  
Townsend, DE 19734  
(302) 378-4756

#### **Maryland:**

The Maryland Christmas Tree Growers' Association  
Andrew Cashman, Executive Secretary  
826 Springdale Road  
New Windsor, MD 21776  
1-800-935-6282

#### **New Jersey:**

The New Jersey Christmas Tree Growers' Association  
John E. Perry, Executive Secretary  
805 Brookside Drive  
Toms River, NJ 08753  
(908) 349-2705

#### **New York:**

The New York Christmas Tree Growers' Association  
Robert Norris, Executive Secretary  
646 Finches Corners  
Red Creek, NY 13143  
(315) 754-8132

#### **Pennsylvania:**

The Pennsylvania Christmas Tree Growers' Association  
Melissa Piper Nelson, Executive Secretary  
44 Cessna Drive  
Halifax, PA 17032  
1-800-547-2842 (Nov. 1-Dec. 23)

#### **Rhode Island:**

The Rhode Island Christmas Tree Growers' Association  
Linda Staley, Executive Secretary  
70 Burdickville Road  
Charlestown, RI 02813  
(401) 364-7599

#### **National Listing:**

If you would like a complete listing of Christmas Tree Growers' Associations throughout the U.S., please write or call the National Christmas Tree Grower's Association: 611 East Wells Street, Milwaukee, WI 53202. (414) 276-6410.

Groups, Seniors & Students; \$4.00 Children 5-11 years of age; free for children under 5 and members.

**The Friends of the Woodlands**  
The Woodlands  
4000 Woodland Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19104  
(215) 387-3019

Make it a Day: A selection of Victorian homes and churches in Woodland's neighborhood will be specially decorated and open to view with light refreshments (1:00-5:00). At 5:00 pm join the friends of Clark Park at 43rd and Chester Avenue to illuminate the community Christmas Tree and start the annual carol sing. Visit the Woodlands from 6:00-9:00 pm; it will be specially lit and adorned with period holiday decorations. Enjoy an evening of caroling around the wassail bowl.

December 15  
1:00-9:00  
\$5.00 donation requested for evening event.

"Give thanks while dining with the Peales." For Thanksgiving week, food historian and author William Woys Weaver and Chef Eric von Starck of Shackamaxon Catering will recreate and discuss the ingredients of a sumptuous six-course dinner from the original cookbooks of the Peale family. The dinner is part of a city-wide retrospective at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Sitting on Thanksgiving Day, November 28 at 5:00 pm  
Second Sitting Saturday, November 30, 7:00 pm  
\$55.00. Children are half price.  
Call (215) 922-2255 for reservations.

**Wyck Association**  
6026 Germantown Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19144  
(215) 848-1690

Historic House Museum with seasonal interest. Home to nine generations of one family with original furnishings. Special natural history material on display relating to the family's involvement with the Peale family.

December 3, 5, 7, 10, 12, 14  
1:00-4:00 pm and by appointment  
Adults: \$5.00; Seniors, Students: \$4.00

Lauri Brunton, Publications associate at the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society since January, edits the *PHS News*. Her love of working with gardeners and garden enthusiasts as a volunteer at the Scott Arboretum and at PHS's Philadelphia Green, led her to complete an internship at Historic Bartram's Gardens where she was hooked on horticulture for good.



The not so traditional peacock Christmas tree at the 1995 Longwood Gardens exhibit. Jim Showers has new ideas for his 1996 entry in the Christmas at Longwood Show.





# Moving beyond Tradition



by Cheryl Lee Monroe

The lights were perfect, flawlessly spaced on the Christmas tree. The peacocks were larger than life: the male perched on the top of the tree, his tail reaching to the floor, and the female tucked into a splendid nest of lights cut deep into the base of the tree.

"That's not traditional," one visitor snapped. Definitely not traditional — it was magic. Jim Showers's magic.

Jim Showers has been working magic with flowers for 20 years, and as he says, he looks at things "upside down and backwards," especially flowers. How does he create his extravagant designs, e.g. a Christmas tree adorned with peacocks? First by ignoring the rules. "When I threw the rule book away, I began to have fun," he says. And it was fun to decorate a tree with no rules, just a theme. The tradition was in putting up a tree, the decoration is another story.

The tree graced with peacocks was Jim's response to Longwood Gardens' (Kennett Square) annual invitation to designers to decorate a holiday tree. With a theme in hand, each designer in December 1995 was assigned a color. Jim Showers's was blue.

After the folks at Longwood strung the lights to perfection, the handmade peacocks were placed. Jim and a friend spent two days making the peacocks from purple heather overlaid with blue and violet sequins, placed one at a time to hide the holes in the sequins. Fluffy white caspia (*Limonium* spp.), a delicate version of german statice, was placed over the first layer of sequins to give an illusion of down. Sequins were again overlaid atop the caspia to replicate breast feathers, and the rest of the body was filled with purple heather and still more caspia. The treetop peacock's tail was a triumph, constructed of more than 100 peacock feathers, each individually placed to replicate nature's magnificence.

The female bird was tucked into her nest, made of grapevine and filled with purple heather and clusters of dried pink and cherry-red roses. Clear crystal ornaments and a string of lights bunched under the nest illuminated Jim's glowing interpretation of new life.

That was only the beginning. The tree

"When I threw the rule book away, I began to have fun." —Jim Showers



Detail of tree on page 20.

would take three days to complete (not counting the peacock construction time, or time for planning and collecting), and would cost several thousands of dollars to replicate. Brilliant blue larkspur with flower heads cut short, was tucked into every niche; bundles of pink and red roses were set deep inside the boughs, a contrasting technique to bring the blues to life. A

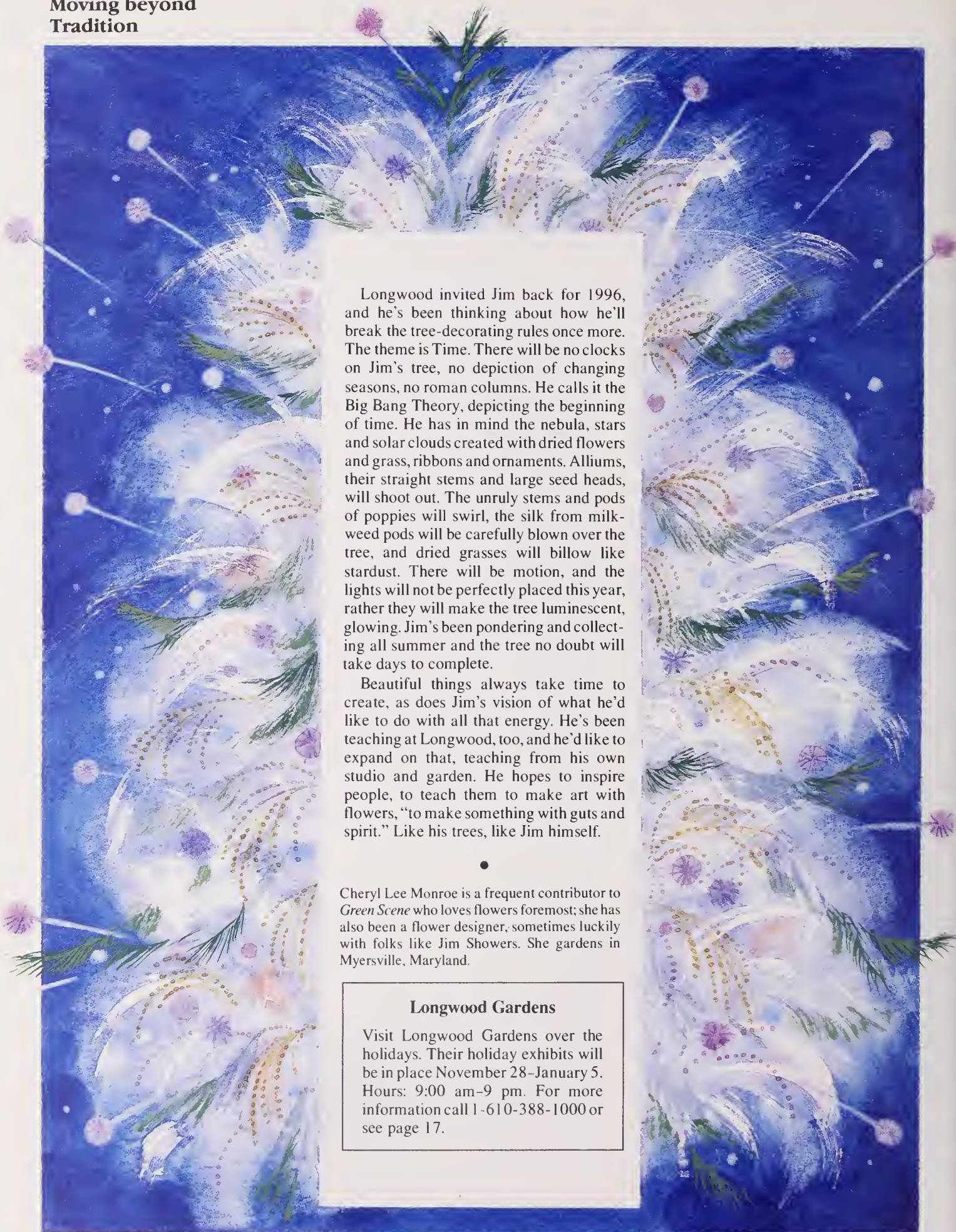
perfectly matched purple and blue paisley swirl ribbon added pizzazz, along with blue and purple crystal ornaments.

Years of experience from Los Angeles, to San Francisco and the last 10 years in Washington, D.C., creating beautifully decorated parties for kings and queens, for embassies, museums and private homes contribute to Jim's imagination. The rest is in the mechanics. Mechanics, to a floral designer, describes the functional details — the underlying wire, tape, glue, containers and any other device that holds up a design. (The peacocks on the Longwood tree started as styrofoam, wire coat hangers, and newspaper.) The more confidence designers have in "mechanics" the more able they are to manifest even their wildest ideas.

Jim's wildest ideas spring from his first love, nature — its simplicity, its force, and its spirit are charged with possibilities for Jim. Jim exercises the talent of restraint perfectly, making things larger than life without overdoing it. He doesn't mix a lot of flowers, preferring that we see each flower or plant for itself. For example, a mantel is laid with large sour cherry branches, the cherries only half ripe, yellow turning to red. Jim will remove every leaf, regardless of how meticulous the task, because they will interfere and droop. Next, the spidery red and yellow petals of gloriosa lilies (*Gloriosa superba* 'Rothschildiana') illuminate the fruits and lastly, tall wispy plumes of grasses appear to float above the whole design. In another design, Jim creates a table-top glory: 100 peach roses in a bowl with grasses, deliberately crisscrossing each other madly in "an orderly jumble." Or peach branches with black moudry grass (*Pennisetum alopecuroides* 'Moudry') dripping down and pale peach *Eremurus* (desert candle) floating above.

continued





Longwood invited Jim back for 1996, and he's been thinking about how he'll break the tree-decorating rules once more. The theme is Time. There will be no clocks on Jim's tree, no depiction of changing seasons, no roman columns. He calls it the Big Bang Theory, depicting the beginning of time. He has in mind the nebula, stars and solar clouds created with dried flowers and grass, ribbons and ornaments. Alliums, their straight stems and large seed heads, will shoot out. The unruly stems and pods of poppies will swirl, the silk from milkweed pods will be carefully blown over the tree, and dried grasses will billow like stardust. There will be motion, and the lights will not be perfectly placed this year, rather they will make the tree luminescent, glowing. Jim's been pondering and collecting all summer and the tree no doubt will take days to complete.

Beautiful things always take time to create, as does Jim's vision of what he'd like to do with all that energy. He's been teaching at Longwood, too, and he'd like to expand on that, teaching from his own studio and garden. He hopes to inspire people, to teach them to make art with flowers, "to make something with guts and spirit." Like his trees, like Jim himself.

Cheryl Lee Monroe is a frequent contributor to *Green Scene* who loves flowers foremost; she has also been a flower designer, sometimes luckily with folks like Jim Showers. She gardens in Myersville, Maryland.

#### Longwood Gardens

Visit Longwood Gardens over the holidays. Their holiday exhibits will be in place November 28-January 5. Hours: 9:00 am-9 pm. For more information call 1-610-388-1000 or see page 17.



# Gardening Books/Gifts for the Self and Others

## Something Old and Something New

by Richard L. Bitner

Not long ago I could stop by my favorite book store to check out the new arrivals of gardening books once a month or so. No longer. These days it seems there are new books coming out weekly. The covers are so attractive and the publisher's recommendations so appealing that one wants to read every one of them; it's like craving one of every plant in a fine mail-order nursery catalog. Like plants, however, few of the books have something strikingly different to offer. Often (like so many of the British gardening books, in my opinion) they are just like yet another *Heuchera*, that is, slightly different veining or leaf edge but nothing that will transform the way we garden. The Country/Side gardener is always ready to offer an opinion on which plants are the most garden-worthy. Here are some of the most reading-worthy of the recent books.

\* \* \*

My favorite in the new crop of books is Ken Druse's *The Collector's Garden: Designing with extraordinary plants*. It caught my attention because the Bellevue Botanic Garden featured on the cover is one of my two favorite public gardens (the other is Wave Hill, also featured in the book). It's an oversized book, but one glance inside reveals that it is not a typical "coffee-table gardening book." In this jewel of a book, Druse acknowledges that his early inspiration came from Ernesta and Fred Ballard's collections. He discusses dozens of individual nurseries, collectors, passionate home gardeners and public gardens: their plants and their interdependence. The book could serve as a travel guide for the finest plant collections in the country. Local people and places featured include Mt. Cuba Center for the Study of Piedmont Flora; Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library; the Delaware Center for Horticulture; and the gardens of Rick Darke ("This is one of the few gardens whose principle design was light."); Charles Cresson ("attached to his property both by birth and hard work... the passion to collect merges with the mandate to preserve"); and Lee Raden ("he remains one of the most enthusiastic gardeners I have ever met"). Space is devoted to the



photos by Ken Druse

Lee Raden's scree garden is featured in Ken Druse's *The Collector's Garden*. Raden, who lives in Charlestown, Pa., is former president of the North American Rock Garden Society and has been an enthusiastic PHS member for 35 years.



North Carolina State University Arboretum whose director, J.C. Raulston, has been one of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's most popular annual speakers.

Druse's essay "Aesthetes" is wonderful, his notes on propagation are wonderful, and his photographs are wonderful (have I used this word too often?). He offers one of

the clearest explanations of plant nomenclature I've seen, concluding "There is method to what might seem a bit mad."

There is a list of plant societies ("Plants are worshipped at Rock Garden Society meetings") and there is a discussion and list of mail-order nurseries (with phone numbers and catalog prices. Thank you!). Darke also includes advice on importing plants. Throughout the book I was interested to see the current design mania for combining chartreuse and burgundy foliage appealingly illustrated. However, I did find the short suggested reading list disappointing. It seemed to list only a few common reference books as well as titles by authors mentioned in the text. But even so, I would like to have seen J.C. Raulston's *The Year in Trees* and Hal Bruce's (sadly, out of print) *How to Grow Wildflowers and Wild Shrubs and Trees in Your Own Garden*.

It would be impossible to call Ken Druse either a garden writer or a garden photographer because in his latest book *The Collector's Garden* he proves himself to be undoubtedly one of our country's best in both fields. This book is a must for every serious plantsperson. It is wonderful. It's not a book I could borrow: it's essential to have one's own copy to circle this and



# Gardening Books

highlight that and write "must find" in the borders. Make no mistake: reading this book will lead to record-breaking plant mail-order bills in '97.

Plants are among the highest-maintenance collectibles. But gardeners have a need to nurture, and in collectors, this need is especially keen.

*The Collector's Garden*  
Ken Druse

\* \* \*

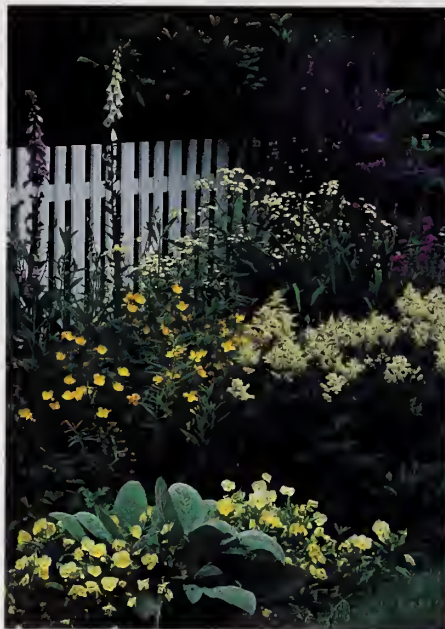
Joe Eck and Wayne Winterrowd are partners in a garden design firm and life companions who have developed a garden considered by many to be among the 10 best in the United States. North Hill is located in a narrow valley in southern Vermont on a south-facing slope in a difficult Zone 4 climate. Their book, *A Year at North Hill: Four Seasons in a Vermont Garden* begins in April and carries the reader through the months in their garden.

Despite dual authorship, the writing is seamless and eloquent. The book is not just about plants. May includes a discussion of the tranquility of weeding, and the beginning of the July section on the temperament of a gardeners contains some of the most beautiful writing one could find anywhere. They begin: "For however glorious the garden's display might be, the true gardener seems always to look behind with regret at what has passed and ahead with longing at what is to come. To be squarely anchored in the moment, to savor just what lies before one and want nothing more — this must be a great bliss for those who possess the ability."

The autumn chapters could be a book themselves. Of conifers they say: "Their return to prominence is as thrilling in its way as the emerging bulbs of March or the re-leafing of the maples and beeches in May. It is the return to consciousness of something loved but almost forgotten."

Although the book's focus is on plants through the seasons, I especially loved the author's reflections on one's relationship to the garden and their numerous suggestions on plant combinations and relationships. *A Year at North Hill* is the only place I've found a lengthy discussion about the problems of gardening on a slope. The book is illustrated with wonderful photographs by Joe Eck, which appear on the same page the plants are discussed. Both the photographs and the prose are thoroughly indexed. Delaware Valley gardeners should be able to grow everything.

photo by Ken Druse



Collector Charles Cresson's garden outside of Philadelphia contains some of the best cultivars of species that exist anywhere. It's featured in Druse's *The Collector's Garden*.

Probably the first step after the most abject needs for survival are met is to grow something pretty, just because it is pretty and for no practical reason. The next, perhaps, is to pursue an act of imaginative recreation, of the past or future or simply a place in one's mind where one would like to be, or to have been, or to be going. This is all just to say that gardening is one of the most complex acts that humanity is given to indulging in.

*A Year at North Hill*  
Eck, Winterrowd

\* \* \*

I learned more about the key concepts of garden design from *Elements of Garden Design*, a little book by Joe Eck, than from my whole shelf of books on designing with color, designing with perennials and the like. The book is a series of essays that appeared over a three-year period in *Horticulture* magazine. Eck leads the reader by the hand through the usual design principles of scale, mass, repose, harmony, structure, garden rooms, access to the garden, etc., without ever talking down. His argument is that what defines a garden is less what is grown in it than how what grows is arranged; what pleases most in a garden is its design, the conscious thought and deliberate

arrangement that gives it its quality. The landscape designer offers much practical advice on dealing with one's site; I used my highlighter on almost every page. It is useful for the new gardener ("the first step in creating a garden is to establish firmly its outer limits . . . one works from the edges inward") or for established gardeners to gain a fresh insight on why they find some facets of their garden satisfying, or unsettling. It would be a useful resource for anyone lecturing on gardening.

There is a point, after we have acquired our favorite plants and learned to grow them well, when we realize that the parts of our garden do not actually make up a whole. It is at that point that we begin to crave an intention, an idea that will make of the garden a unified whole, an aesthetic entity.

*Elements of Garden Design*  
Joe Eck

\* \* \*

Along with many other serious gardeners I've been gradually changing an area where I once attempted to grow only perennials (like the borders I read about in British gardening books) into a "mixed border." I've found inspiration and loads of ideas in Ann Lovejoy's recent book *American Mixed Border. Gardens for All Seasons*. Lovejoy is a writer I always look for in *Horticulture* magazine and the author of many serious books on plants.

Lovejoy defines the mixed border as a framework of woody plants, many evergreen, with perennials and annuals appearing within the frame providing a great variety of plants with an emphasis on foliage with seasonal bursts of color. In a mixed border the plants are grouped according to cultural needs as well as for design purposes; one deals with the reality of each garden site rather than imposing patterns. "It is far easier to care for plants that are well placed than those that are stressed," she says.

Lovejoy's helpful text has separate chapters on trees, shrubs, annuals, vines, etc., in the mixed border. Each chapter begins with an analysis of a specific well-known American garden followed by a thorough discussion and dozens of examples of combinations. The writing seems to flow from the uniformly helpful photographs throughout this sizable book. Although Lovejoy



gardens in Bainbridge Island, Washington, and many of the example gardens are from the Northwest, she lists the zones for all the plants mentioned. Many of the unusual plants one will need to obtain via mail-order, but her approach is always commonsensical: "Enchanting gardens are often made with whatever plants come readily to hand, and there is less value in seeking out wondrous rarities for our mixed borders than in learning to use ordinary perennials extraordinarily well."

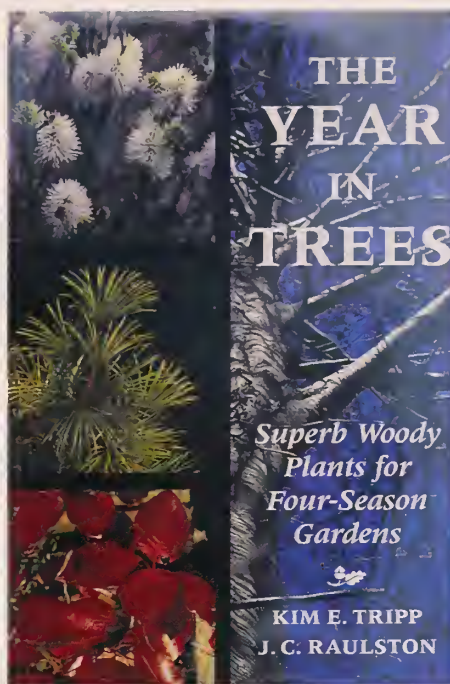
The Books for Further Reading list at the back of Lovejoy's book could serve as a catalog for a comprehensive practical horticultural library. This super book should feed the gardener's imagination for many nights during the coming winter months and the complete index, which includes text and photographs, makes the book a useful one to refer to again and again throughout gardening seasons to come.

If your garden is pleasant, or charming, or exciting, or comfortable despite your resources rather than because they are so vast, you have a good deal to be proud of. As always, compromises help. Accept that your yard isn't Sissinghurst, remember that gardening making takes time and patience, aim to please yourself, and you will find enormous pleasures in the process.

*The American Mixed Border*  
Ann Lovejoy

\* \* \*

Of course, good garden borders require healthy and attractive living plants. One should do lots of homework before selecting trees and shrubs since they are the most enduring and expensive plants in our gardens. *The Year in Trees: Superb Woody Plants for Four-Season Gardens* contains 150 plant portraits and provides all the information needed to select and successfully grow woodies that offer superior ornamental characteristics and are trouble-free and reliable. The text is by Kim Tripp, a teacher and researcher at the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University. The photographs are by J.C. Raulston, an eminent and enthusiastic American plantsman. The elegant writing is full of useful detail but executed in a conversational style that makes one fall in love with each plant. I can't report on the entire book since



I'm savoring it by reading only a tree a day. The photographs are beautifully reproduced in separate sections of the book and although usually limited to one plate per plant, are perfectly illustrative of the most ornamental feature of each plant.

The index is limited to the common and Latin names of the plants. There are no "lists" of plants for clay soil, plants for wind exposure, deer-resistant plants and the like. However, the home gardener will find no more readable, reliable and up-to-date source to learn about the cultivation and ornamental characteristics of the "woodies," which establish the structure of our gardens and borders. A timeless book to return to again and again.

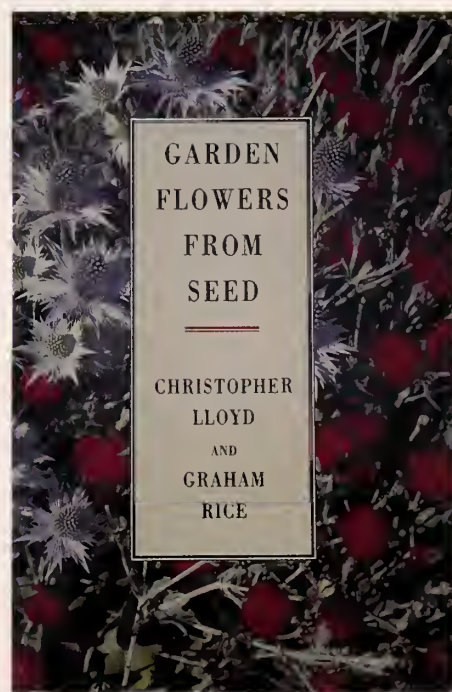
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Most books I've consulted on starting flowers from seed have either been boring, tiresome or, more usually, incomplete. *Garden Flowers from Seed* is none of these. It is a lively dialogue between two famous British gardeners, Christopher Lloyd and Graham Rice. We've all consulted books by one or both of them while passing through our British-gardening-book-reading period. Annuals, biennials and perennials, from Acacia to Zinnia are discussed: when to start seeds indoors, when to direct sow, mediums to use, when special treatments are necessary and when it is necessary to have fresh seed.

The exchanges between Lloyd and Rice are witty and highly opinionated with often

markedly differing views about plant combinations. They even offer detailed instructions on growing *Cardiocrinum*, which takes seven years to flower from seed and requires, according to Rice, an "insufferably well-organized gardener." (Pictured in *The Collector's Garden*, Charles Cresson was one of the first gardeners in the Northeast to grow it.) There is an engaging discussion on how to set your *Dictamnus* plant alight and on *Cynoglossum amabile*: "This is a startlingly intense light blue, pure and unadulterated by mauve. A patch of it in your garden will catch the attention of visitors who normally notice nothing less down to earth than the food on their plate."

The book is full of ideas for plant combinations. One wonderful pairing I want to try is *Gazania Sundance* (shades of orange, crimson, yellow, rust and mahogany) with a carpet of *Helichrysum petiolare*. It was nice to note they indicate how long each plant takes to flower from seed, something seed catalogs sometimes don't admit. The photographs add nothing to the



book. Although the index is outstanding, nowhere are the hardiness zones of the plants indicated. The reader will need to consult another reference for this information since some of the plants hardy in England might not survive our winters.

This is a book one is more likely to borrow from the PHS library that need to own but consulting it will build confidence and produce success. There's nothing more special than saying "I grew it from seed!"



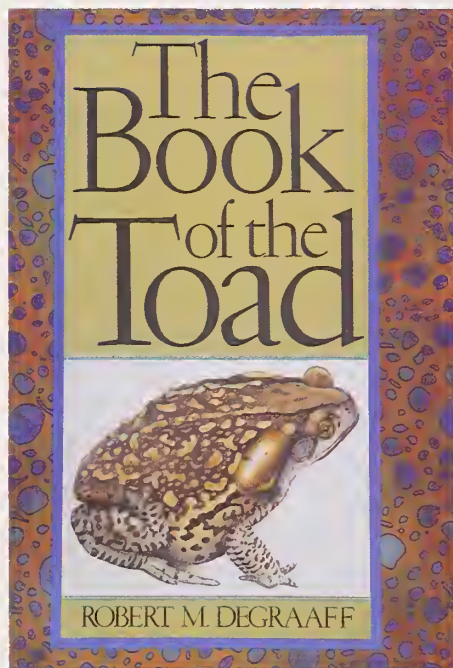
# Gardening Books

But the most popular ageratum is a dumpy, squat little thing, ideal for edging where you are frightened of the edging plant encroaching on your precious lawn. No danger of that with ageratum. If I admit to loathing these 6- to 8-in. pygmies, that is just my prejudice in favour of a plant that grows more as nature intended. The public gets what it deserves and desires.

*Garden Flowers from Seed*  
Christopher Lloyd

\* \* \*

Evening visitors to my garden often comment on how many *Bufo americanus* I have. These are not night-blooming plants, but my best ally against flies, mosquitoes and caterpillars: toads. I thoroughly enjoyed reading everything I ever wanted to know about toads recently in Robert DeGraaff's *The Book of the Toad: A natural and magical history of toad-human relations*.



After clarifying the difference between a frog and a toad (the former a water creature with a moist, smooth skin and long powerful hind legs for leaping; the latter primarily terrestrial with skin that is drier and rougher with shorter and weaker hind legs that can only hop), the author proves that toads are far more interesting and brighter. He reviews at length how toads have been considered through the ages by different

cultures. He examines the symbolism of their life cycle, their varied and fascinating vocal abilities, the amazing speed of their tongue-flip, their alleged pharmaceutical uses and their breeding habits (definitely not to be discussed in this family magazine).

They appear in many folk and fairy tales and have been used in rituals, magic and witchcraft. Even in Western culture there has only this century been a turn in public opinion to appreciate the toad for the valuable gardening ally it is. DeGraaff reports conjecture that in a three-month summer period a single mature toad might wipe out almost 10,000 noxious insects. This book is not only rich in information but beautifully designed — printed on fine stock and illustrated with toad representations in all the fine arts.

*DeGraaff reports conjecture that in a three-month summer period a single mature toad might wipe out almost 10,000 noxious insects.*

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R.C. Reddell's *Full Bloom Thoughts from an Opinionated Gardener* is a collection of his gardening columns from the San Francisco *Chronicle*. He is well-known in the West for his many books and videos on roses. Much in this collection is devoted to roses, which do not interest me, nevertheless I had to call up a friend immediately and recite Reddell's report on how he learned about roses from Maria Callas. Other seldom-addressed subjects include coexisting with pets in the garden, garden gadabouts, and "It Was a Flop — Get Over It."

His commentary on suffering the humiliation of exhibiting with unpredictable judges is reminiscent of Henry Mitchell's curmudgeonly writing (see *Green Scene*, Sept-Oct, 1993). Though many of the essays are amusing and its compact size makes it perfect for reading in bed, *Full Bloom* is so packed with useful information you will want to have a pad and pencil handy. He offers the most readable discussion of chemical sprays I've seen. The book has a good index, but unfortunately Reddell does not supply growing zone information on the plants mentioned.

*Reddell offers the most readable discussion of chemical sprays I've seen.*

\* \* \*

*Taylor's Master Guide to Gardening* is not a book for bedtime reading. It is the one horticultural reference I would want to take to a deserted island (one would hope an island with rich, humusy, well-drained soil). This oversized volume is an authoritative encyclopedia of more than 3,000 plants with over a thousand excellent photographs. The best plants are selected by experts from every region of the country with recommendations of sound cultural practices and solutions of common landscape design problems. There is a helpful glossary and index.

*Taylor's Master Guide to Gardening is the one horticultural reference I would want to take to a deserted island.*

\* \* \*

The memories of the Japanese Garden of the Fort Worth Botanic Gardens haunted me for weeks after I visited it recently. I was excited to find *Reflections of the Spirit/ Japanese Gardens in America*, which helped me understand better why I was so moved. This book by Maggie Oster evolved from discussions between the author, a Kentucky gardener and writer, and Claire Sawyers, director of Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College, about the American interpretations of Japanese gardens. The book is a sumptuously illustrated guidebook of the best public Japanese gardens in the U.S. with informative discussions of design and meaning. I particularly liked the chapter and photographs on rock and stone, which play such a dominant visual role in these gardens.

The placement of steps prescribe the speed and the perspective of how a garden is observed. The twists and turns they take can imply imaginary water coursing along its chosen path or a still and tranquil pond, as well as man's search for inner peace.

*Reflections of the Spirit  
Japanese Gardens in America*  
Maggie Oster

\* \* \*



Japanese gardens encourage us to slow down, pay attention and be fully present in our gardens. The vest-pocket book *Zen Gardening A Down-to-Earth Philosophy* by Veronica Ray is a book of reflections and lessons about working in harmony with nature. It is a book to be relished in small bites.

We can begin thinking of ourselves as part of nature's overall design, rather than conquerors, preparing to do battle with weeds, aphids, and clay soil. Our role is to blend into the garden, to become one with it, not to overcome it.

*Zen Gardening*  
Veronica Ray

\* \* \*

*Trees, Shrubs and Vines for Attracting Birds: A Manual for the Northeast* is the most complete book I've found for selecting woody plants that offer birds year-round food, nest sites and protection. It remains definitive and available despite being published over 15 years ago. Along with beautiful pencil drawings, the habitat, landscape value, propagation, etc., is described in valuable detail for 162 plant species. The specific birds that use each plant are listed with indications of whether they prefer it for food, nesting or cover. I was amazed how many birds prefer my enemy vines: bittersweet and poison ivy.

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Jeff Lynch, one of Longwood Gardens' young plantmen who has a vast knowledge of plants and their ways put me onto *Landscaping with Native Trees* by Guy Sternberg and Jim Wilson. I had ignored it because the cover and layout gives the impression that it is just another tree encyclopedia. Not so. I found information about some of my favorite eastern North America native trees in this book that I hadn't come across anywhere else. They discuss in detail the ornamental value of each tree during every season with a keen and sensitive eye. The book is particularly helpful when discussing problems of each species (all too often, like dog breed books, this issue is glossed over!). There is an extensive nursery source list as well as a list of natural heritage conservation agencies. All serious gardeners and teachers will refer to this resource again and again. This is a superb book.

## The Author Recommends

\**American Mixed Border Gardens for All Seasons*, Ann Lovejoy, Macmillan Publishing Company, 1993, ISBN 0-02-575580-3, \$35.00

*The Book of the Toad A Natural History of Toad-Human Relations*, Robert M. DeGraaff, Park Street Press, 1991, ISBN 0-89281-261-3, \$19.95

*Clematis and the Ranunculaceae A Family of Flowers*, Deborah Kellaway, Trafalgar Square Publishing, 1994, ISBN 1-57076-001-2

\**The Collector's Garden Designing with extraordinary plants*, Ken Druse, Clarkson Potter, 1996, ISBN 0-517-79983-9, \$45.00

\**Elements of Garden Design*, Joe Eck, Henry Holt & Co., 1996, ISBN 0-8050-3719-5, \$22.50

*Full Bloom Thoughts from an Opinionated Gardener*, Rayford Clayton Reddell, Harmony Books, 1996, ISBN 0-517-70337-8, \$22.50

\**Garden Flowers from Seed*, Christopher Lloyd and Graham Rice, Timber Press, 1994, ISBN 0-88192-296-x, Paper, \$19.95

\**Landscaping with Native Trees*, Guy Sternberg and Jim Wilson, Chapters, 1995, ISBN 1-881527-66-2, Paper \$24.95

\**Taylor's Master Guide to Gardening*, Rita Buchanan and Roger Holmes, Houghton Mifflin, 1994, ISBN 0-395-64995-1, \$60.00

\**Reflections of the Spirit Japanese Gardens in America*, Maggie Oster, Dutton Studio Books, 1993, ISBN 0-525-93566-5, \$40.00

\**Trees, Shrubs and Vines for Attracting Birds A Manual for the Northeast*, Richard M. DeGraaff and Gretchen M. Whitman, Univ. Mass Press, 1979, ISBN 0-87023-202-9

\**A Year at North Hill. Four Seasons in a Vermont Garden*, Joe Eck and Wayne Winterrowd, Little, Brown & Co., 1995, ISBN 0-316-20916-3, \$29.95

\**The Year in Trees Superb Woody Plants for Four-Season Gardens*, Kim E. Tripp and J.C. Raulston, Timber Press, 1995, ISBN 0-88192-320-6, \$44.95

*Zen Gardening A Down-to-Earth Philosophy*, Veronica Ray, Berkley Books, 1996, ISBN 0-425-15299-5, \$10.00

## Periodicals

\**The Avant Gardener*, P.O. Box 489, New York, N.Y. 10028, \$20/year 12 issues

\**homeground*, P.O. Box 271, Linwood, N.J. 08221, \$38.00 4 issues/year

All publications are available to anyone for previewing at Pennsylvania Horticultural Society Library. Those with \* are available for circulation to members of PHS.

\* \* \*

The Ranunculaceae family contains many of the Country/Side gardener's favorite plants, making me willing to break my informal rule about not recommending British books. Deborah Kellaway's *Clematis and the Ranunculaceae: A Family of Flowers* reads like an adventure story and it illustrated with ravishing photographs. Her elegant, first-person writing reminds me of Allen Lacy's prose (see below). One will never forget the difference between sepals and petals after reading this book and will be better prepared for next month's Country/Side adventure.

*Helleborus orientalis* is an easy plant to grow. It will survive on heavy clay or chalk, though what it prefers — like all its family — is leaf-mould and moist loam. It is a gift to town gardeners for, like *H. niger*, it will prosper in deep shade.

*Clematis and the Ranunculaceae*  
Deborah Kellaway

## Choice periodicals

There are two periodicals available only by subscription that no serious gardener should be without. Don't be deceived by the fraternity newsletter appearance of *The Avant Gardener*, a monthly that appropriately calls itself a "Unique Horticultural News Service." I have found it a uniformly reliable source of cutting-edge information on all facets of gardening. Subscribe to it sight unseen: you will never get so much for less than the price of a trendy gold-colored hosta.

A bit more expensive (I share the cost of my subscription with another gardener) is Allen Lacy's quarterly publications *homeground*. It is now entering its fifth year of publication and is a joy to the eye as well as the intellect. Allen Lacy is among the best living garden writers. I grab anything with his name on it, whether as editor or writer. He has a new book *The Inviting Garden* coming out in the fall of '97. My name is on the list at the bookstore already.

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Richard L. Bitner is a practicing physician anesthesiologist and a teaching assistant at Longwood Gardens. He interrupts his reading and gardening to serve on the PHS Members, Gold Medal Plant Award and Publication committees.





# In the Pit—A Gardener's Winter

 by Toni Brinton

After the last blackened tomato vine has been torn from its tired moorings and the pale papery hosta leaves have been raked away, I always look for ways to relieve the bleakness of winter.

The birdfeeders get washed and rehung and filled with fresh seed. The antics of chickadees and their dipping and diving flights do afford winter entertainment as do the variety of woodpeckers that scatter the small birds as they clumsily clutch a feeder or a bag of suet. Then when the snows fall and whiten the understory of our woodlands we watch the deer (outside our deer fence) and the foxes.

The winter of '96 was long and the snows deep. During the time from mid-December to mid-March we were able to distinguish two different foxes, one more slender and lighter red than the other. The chunkier, darker fox found his way easily under the deer fence of plastic mesh, and we watched as he stalked the moles and voles when they emerged from their tunnels under the snow to munch on tender, apparently delicious, hosta tubers. The fox would sit quietly with his head cocked, then pounce. When he was successful he would stride proudly away with his trophy's tail dangling from one side of his mouth.

There are evergreens in our garden — trees and azaleas — to relieve the dark brownness of winter. We do have the interesting barks of dogwood (*Cornus kousa*), seven suns flower (*Heptacodium miconroides*), chinese elm tree (*Ulmus parvifolia*), and kentucky coffee tree (*Gymnocladus dioica*), and the chinese quince, *Cydonia sinensis* to provide variety to the tall brown trunks of oak, ash and hickory.

Still this does not satisfy my need to touch earth and smell its richness. I am fortunate that the pleasure of the color and fragrance of the summer's garden is carried indoors in our pit hot house. We devised this structure 14 years ago to provide me with light on a winter's day and a place to touch ground.

Our pit hot house is not an automatic structure; at dusk we draw two covers, one a quilt of sailcloth and the other a truck tarp, across its southfacing wall, which is glazed with 4-ft.-wide panels of double-walled acrylic. These covers keep whatever

heat is accumulated during a sunny day in the pit. The only added heat is from an oil-filled, small electric radiator, also manually turned on and off. The curtains are opened in morning and the heat turned off except on the darkest, coldest days. Is it worth the effort? For me to feel the sun's warmth and be surrounded by light is enormously restorative on a winter's day.

The bulbs that I start for ourselves and friends vary each year. In '96 I tried for the first time *Narcissus* 'Soleil d'Or,' which

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*South African plants have our winter as their summer, I think we all should try more of this flora from the other end of the world.*

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proved to be fragrant, but without the cloying sweetness of the paperwhite narcissus. As soon as bulbs show green tips above the pebbles and water in which I grow tender narcissus, I bring them into the pit for several days of bright light before moving them into the house. They seem to be sturdier, less likely to topple, and the bloom lasts longer when they get a sunny start in the pit. Perhaps it was just the luck of the year but the 'Soleil d'Or' did perform well. Their sunny yellow color and less strident fragrance guarantees they will be tried again.

Other bulbs I try are a mixture of South African natives. Freesias of yellow and blue, whose floppiness is difficult to manage, are planted in hanging baskets and allowed to droop from the highest part of the pit. Various cultivars of *Lachenalia*, with yellow and pink and a surprising red bloom, are not the traditional pretty plant, but the columnar inflorescences have intricate flower parts and add their different forms to the winter scene. As South African plants have our winter as their summer, I think we all should try more of this flora from the other end of the world. Like the freesias, you simply dry out *Lachenalia* and store out of the rain in summer. I've grown two varieties of *Lachenalia* from the North American Rock Garden Society Seed Exchange, producing first flowers in two to three years. *Veltheimia viridifolia* bulbs bring January joy with their tall stately pink

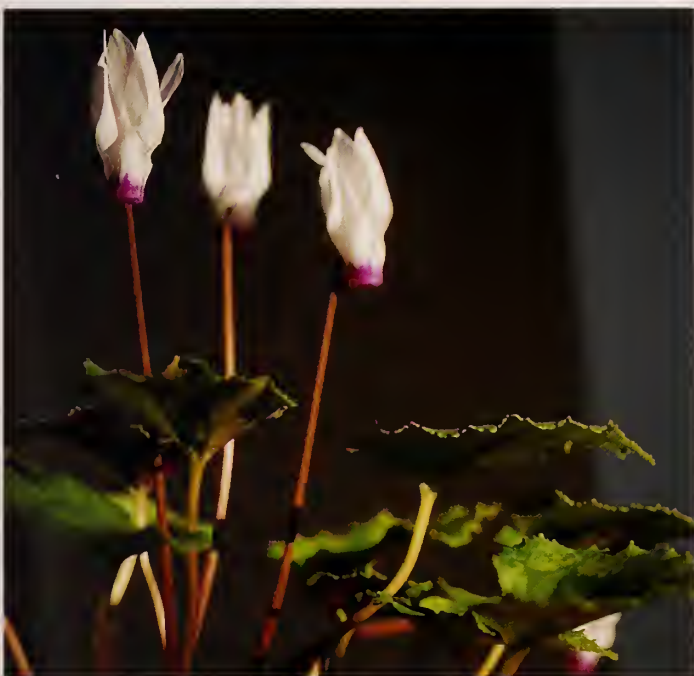
column of flowers and gorgeous waxy green fountain of leaves. All of the above bulbs do not require a pit or greenhouse, so anyone can try these. *Veltheimia* bulbs of blooming size are listed commonly in bulb catalogs and, if dried out properly each summer, will last for years. My oldest bulb is now 14 years old.

The two large baskets of *Seemannia sylvatica* do require bright sun to bring into bloom, which happens just after Thanksgiving and lasts until February. The abundant red tube flowers complement the Christmas greenery. These get cut back every spring, have not been repotted in an age, and live quietly outside in the summer, the pots buried in my shady sand bed along with other winter plants. I have grown accustomed to these old friends, and take their winter cheer for granted but they always elicit approving comments. They are a real addition to the winter plant indoor scene.

Cyclamen of wide variety, 90% grown from seed supplied by Nancy Goodwin of Hillsborough, N.C., bloom in the fall, winter and spring. They do need the sun and the heat of pit in fall to come out of the summer dormancy and begin their bloom cycle. My favorite is the pure white *C. hederifolium*. I have *C. persicum* and *C. coum* as well. I know that some of these can be grown outdoors, and I envy Nancy's sweep of cyclamen under her North Carolina trees. My bulbs rot in wet weather here in West Chester (Pennsylvania), as in the soggy summer of '96, or the squirrels find their corms and delight in chewing away on them. I have to place bird netting doubled over so that the potted corms resting in a dry place under the eaves of our deck in summer are not eaten by squirrels. All these cyclamen are easy and rewarding to grow, producing beautifully mottled leaves, variously colored from deep green with silvery markings to pewter-colored with green tracery, and my *C. coum* has plain green leaves but brilliant cerise blooms.

For several years I have had *Primula x kewensis* with bright pure yellow umbels of flowers, faithfully blooming every February/March and on into the spring. *Primula farinosa* is a miniature with silvery meal on its leaves that surround the baby pink toy inflorescence.





**Top left:** Woodpeckers eat seed as well as insects. Despite the fact that there's barely perching room on the feeder, these two, a red-bellied and a flicker, are refueling on sunflower seed. **Top right:** Four feet below ground level, this pit hot house, grows winter-flowering plants and bulbs, stores summer container-grown treasures, and is a great spot for starting seeds of all kinds. A wonderfully cozy source of winter sun and fun for its owner. **Bottom left:** *Cyclamen persicum*, a winter-flowering species that can be easily grown from seed, produces welcome winter bloom. One plant can continue to throw up new buds and blossoms over three months, roughly from January to March. **Bottom right:** *Primula obconica* is sold everywhere for winter houseplants, but you can grow them from seed, finding unusual colors plus the pride of a growing achievement.

A new *Primula* came into the pit in 1996, and proved a spectacular addition. Dot Plyler of the American Primrose Society, Doretta Klaber Chapter, sponsors a primula seed sowing in February. From the seed sown in February 1995 came a large group of mostly hardy primula, but *P. obconica*, from a Japanese source, in two shades, pink/lavender and apricot, turned into the prima donnas of that year's seeds. Emerging around April Fool's Day '95 as tiny leaves in their community pot, they grew and grew and grew and a few are still blooming in my primrose bed where they are summing. I am hoping that the seed I am collecting is viable and that in February '97 I will sow progeny of this large-flowered beautiful primrose of soft subtle colors.

By mid-March, there is usually some

spring in the air. Some of the new NARGS seeds may begin to show the first tentative bits of green in their 3- or 4-in. pots lined up on a shelf in the pit, some having been sown as soon as they arrived in the mail in January. Others are sown and put outside to freeze and thaw as they would in nature. With the yellow strap flowers of the *Hamamelis* *xintermedia* 'Arnold Promise' fading now, just outside the pit entrance door, with the crocus and first daffodils showing outside, the pure white of the Christmas rose (*Helleborus niger*), now fading to pink, the lenten hellebores (*Helleborus orientalis*) showing their wide variety of colors, shapes and sizes, the gardening year gets busy. But the pit will continue to provide the pots of color for the house, while it produces new seedlings and cuttings

for the next year's garden. By April 1, cooking and cleaning are getting lower and lower on my priority list.

I have survived another winter with the help of my sun pit. Winter vacations are traveling north to deep snow for skiing, downhill and cross country. I button up the pit, trust the plants inside to the care of a wonderful plant sitter, and so far, have come home to happy, blooming plants. The pit remains my best bet for winter warmth and sun. And best of all I don't lose touch with earth.

•

Toni Brinton gardens in West Chester, Pennsylvania, botanizes in New Hampshire, and is president of the John Bartram Association which cares for America's oldest botanic garden in Philadelphia along the lower Schuylkill.





Fall (statice): a beeswax painting by the author.





# Painting with Beeswax

 by Vickie Mowrer

I was at the Philadelphia Art & Antique Show at the Armory in 1993 with my good friend Cathy Wert. A photographer, she was looking at old photos while I wandered around looking at everything. As we meandered through the vendors' areas I spied a little landscape painting. It was tiny — about 4 in. x 6 in. But even from a distance it had a quality that drew me to it. When I got quite close, I realized I could not figure out the medium that was used to create it. It wasn't watercolor or pastel, and it didn't appear to be oil either. I located Cathy who has had years of schooling in the arts to help solve the mystery. She studied it for quite awhile and finally delivered her analysis. She said, "Although I have never really seen one before, I believe it's an encaustic."

"A what?," I said. That was my introduction to this fascinating medium.

For the next two years I searched for information about this technique. Only snippets were available. All I really knew after all this time and effort, was that encaustic painting was done with beeswax, that it required heat and that it was nearly a lost art form. Just about the time I was ready to give up my search, I received an unexpected phone call informing me that Dorothy Masom was scheduled to teach a class in encaustic painting techniques at the Art Center in Millersburg, Pennsylvania. Being a tenacious sort, I was able to procure Masom's phone number; I called her. I discovered that she lives in Selinsgrove and Hallelujah!, she had published a guide book. I sent her a check, she sent me the manual, and I was off and running.

Through Dorothy's book I discovered that I could join the 'Encaustic Network Unlimited,' a small but active group of artists working in encaustic. They keep in touch with one another via a Round Robin letter system. I became a member and have learned much from these interesting people of all ages from all over the world. Then last summer a class was held at the Women's Studio Workshop in Woodstock, New York. I attended with great joy. Finally, a real *live* teacher. I've been happily experimenting ever since.

The word 'encaustic' comes from the Greek word 'enkaustikos,' which means to

'burn in' and refers to the process where heat is used to fuse structural layers of beeswax during the construction work. Initially the Egyptians and the Greeks used beeswax as a preservative. Still today its waterproofing ability protects surfaces from deterioration due to moisture. Do you remember sealing jam jars with paraffin wax? That is the principle in action.

Most of our present knowledge regarding the early use of beeswax comes from the Roman historian Pliny and the Greek poet Homer. The Egyptians used the wax from bees mixed with some resins in the mummification of their dead. The Greeks used it to waterproof their warships. Although information is sketchy, it seems that the Greeks who were working to preserve their leaders' ships, discovered that the wax could not only be pigmented but manipulated via various heated implements. Well, leave it to the Greeks! They could make art happen under the most unpredictable circumstances. Waterproofing warships gave rise to the decoration of warships. Homer writes of the 'Painted Ships' of the great Greek warriors who fought at Troy. Pliny mentions two artists who became renowned having started out as ship painters.

The best known of all encaustic paintings are the Fayum funeral portraits, which were discovered by archeologists excavating in Egyptian tombs at Fayum on the River Nile. These paintings were done by

Greek painters living in Egypt who had adopted many of the customs of the Egyptians including mummifying their dead. The portraits were done of the deceased, depicting them usually in the prime of their life, and placed above the person's mummy as a memorial. Many of these pieces have survived to our time with virtually no cracking, chipping, darkening or fading of color, which attests to the incredible durability of the medium. Any damage that occurred could simply be reheated and immediately repaired. The many virtues of the encaustic painting could not however, survive the economic instability brought on by the decline of the Roman Empire. Eventually it was replaced by tempera, which was less cumbersome and much less expensive. Tempera was followed by oil and for centuries encaustic became a lost art. Although it is still difficult today to find information and teachers, both do exist.

Painting with beeswax is a bit magical. You can control it to a point but it also has a mind of its own . . . as do plants, gardens and nature. The color quality is unlike any other medium; it is simultaneously intense, vibrant and luminous. It is also possible to create subtle watercolor-like washes that can be layered one over the other. The effect is one of great depth, seeming as if you can peer 'into' the painting.

The quality of preservation holds a particular fascination for me, and that is what

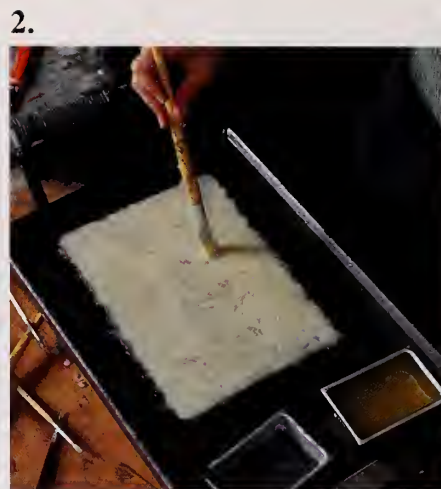


photos by Ira Beckoff

The author incorporated a photograph as part of a keepsake collage for an encaustic painting created as a gift.



## Step-by-Step Painting with Beeswax



1. Assemble all of the ingredients necessary to begin working. Unpigmented and pigmented beeswax, brushes, handmade paper, flower petals and parts are needed for this project. Melt unpigmented wax onto a hot palette. An ordinary pancake griddle will do nicely. One of the two small tins contains melted parafin, used to clean brushes. The other contains a pool of unpigmented wax to dilute colors.

2. A sheet of handmade paper is lowered into the melted wax and a brush used to thoroughly saturate it with the wax.

3. Choose colors for the background and melt pools of each onto the hot palette.

4. Make an encaustic 'wash.' Move the colors around with a brush until you are happy with the way they are intermingling.

5. Place the wax-saturated paper into the wash and let it absorb the pigment for a few minutes. Turn it over. Brush some of the wash into the other side and turn over again. Choose which side you like the best as the front.

photos by Ira Beckoff



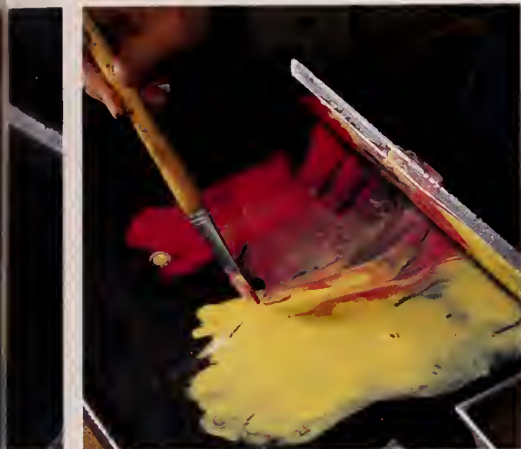
Snow Star (Queen Anne's lace) by the author.

led me to do the work represented in the photographs accompanying this article. As Americans speed ahead in the world of technology and mark time by the nano-second, they are not only losing touch with nature (gardeners excluded!) but also with the importance of taking time to record their significant events and stories. Comparatively, far less attention is paid to the preservation of personal and family memories than to mastering the Internet or knowing what a Superstar eats for breakfast.

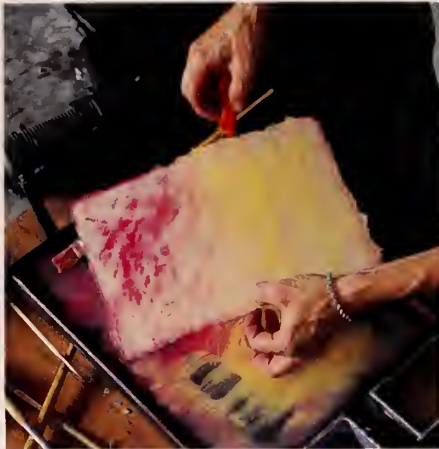
At the time I was researching beeswax painting, I was also experimenting with paper making and pressing flowers and various other plant parts. I have a keen interest in art forms that somehow stem from nature. In an epiphanous moment I realized that all three of the processes I was playing with shared this trait and that they could probably be successfully combined. The idea of sealing a pressed flower to a handmade sheet of paper with the wax from a bee was really exciting. I knew if I could make it work, the flower color would never fade or darken and the plants' parts would never shatter, crumble or break. I had several sheets of handmade paper in stock that my friend and paper maker Betsy Miraglia had made for me to use as background pieces for a series of whimsical pressed floral pieces I was working on. I hauled the paper sheets into the kitchen, spread out my many hundreds of plant parts, got the waxes hot and began. At this point I have mastered sealing the flower to the paper with beeswax and have produced some interesting work. Now I am moving to another level where I am adding pigment to the beeswax and using the natural coloration of the flower as a creative



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6. Choose your plant pieces. Carefully position the petals onto the paper. Position any other plant parts and seal all with a thin coating of unpigmented wax with the brush.

7. Choose your color palette and melt a small pool of each onto a clean hot surface.

8. Dip a heated brush into a color and begin to embellish the plant parts.

9. Vickie Mowrer demonstrates the essential 'burning in,' a step absolutely required for a work to be considered a true encaustic. Here she uses a hot air gun. The lower left flower has been burned in and the upper right has not.

springboard.

Then alas, another epiphanous moment came when I was faced with delivering a 40th birthday gift to a special friend. I was working on my wax-paper-flower pieces, thinking about my friend's gift and trying to figure out what I could give him that would not be just another nice, but relatively useless, trinket. At that moment I remembered a great photograph that was taken of him only a few months before that really captured his essence and wondered if I could *possibly* preserve this photograph with a coating of wax. I also remembered that I had some flowers that his son had picked for me pressed in a book. A new idea was born! Keepsake collages! I have had the pleasure of doing several since that time.

### Sources for supplies

If you are interested in experimenting with encaustic painting, here's what you can do: Contact Rochester Art Supply (150 West Main Street, Rochester, NY 14614; ph #1-800-836-8940) and R&F Encaustics (110 Prince Street, Kingston, NY; ph# 800-206-8088). These are the only two companies in the country that carry a line of materials for the encaustic painter. Rochester Art Supply has a manual available called 'Enkaustikos' that was compiled by Ann Huffman. It contains the most up-to-date information available on encaustic technique, safety measures and equipment. One item of interest: The best wax is produced by *Apis Melifor*, a breed of bee that was developed in Australia and is farmed there under strict quarantine to produce a superior and whiter wax. **One word of caution. Do not try this with paraffin or Crayola crayons.** These are

petroleum products and present many hazards if overheated that beeswax does not.

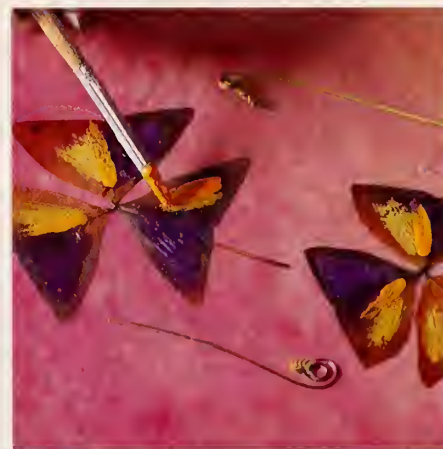
I recommend that you contact the ENU (Encaustic Network Unlimited) and sign up. To do this send a S.A.S.E. to Membership Director: Bea Gilmore, 855 Driftwood Drive, Graham, NC 27253. It costs nothing and your turn to pen the Round Robin won't come due for about two years. In the meantime you will receive a ton of information from some of the most surprising and interesting people who each have an interest in this subject for many reasons. I have one letter that I would just love to show a handwriting analyst! It is the most incredible writing style I have ever seen. This one is in direct contrast to another that was computer generated . . . graphics and all. And still another that was typed on an old Olivetti Lettera typewriter. This one is so much fun to look at and it evokes all kinds of memories for me. We all love to receive correspondence, but sadly, few of us find the kind of pleasure in writing that the Victorians did. This is a great way to get lots of letters from the effort of writing just one! And perhaps through your new pen pals, you will be intrigued and find yourself inspired to take the plunge into the fascinating world of painting with the wax from a bee!

Vickie Mowrer trained in art, floral decorating and garden design at Temple University. The Philadelphia School of Textile and The John Brooks School of Garden Design in England. She creates floral magic, gardens of merit and sculpture in the Philadelphia region and beyond. She may be reached at 215-482-7292.

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Longwood Gardens: The holiday season begins at Longwood on November 28 and ends January 5, part of the horticultural holiday bonanza in the Delaware Valley. See page 14.

photo by Larry Albee/Longwood Gardens







# GREEN SCENE

18 27

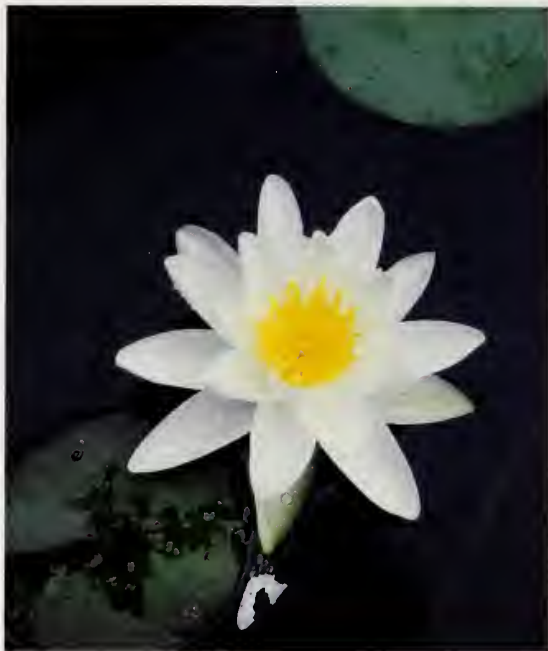
THE PENNSYLVANIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY • Jan./Feb. 1997 \$2.75



*Tracing Flower Shows through  
Philately.*

See page 10.





15.



22.

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Ticket information call 215-988-8899.



Inside front cover: Stamps collected by Suzanne  
L. Haney. See story on page 10.

## *Grow with us.*

in this issue

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Horticultural Society Gold Medal  
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Volume 25, Number 3 January/February 1997

**THE PENNSYLVANIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY**

100 N. 20th Street, Philadelphia, Pa. 19103-1495

Telephone: 215-988-8800

Horticultural Hotline: 215-988-8777

Monday through Friday 9:30am to 12 Noon (Hotline is closed in December)

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**Designer:** Julie Baxendell, Baxendells' Graphic

**Printer:** ALCOM Printing Group, Inc.

The **GREEN SCENE**, (USPS 955580), Volume 25, No. 3, published bimonthly, January, March, May, July, September, November, by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, a non-profit membership organization at 100 N. 20th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103. Subscription: \$12.95—Single Copy: \$2.75 (plus \$1.05 shipping). Second class postage paid at Philadelphia, PA 19103. • **POSTMASTER:** Send address change to THE GREEN SCENE, 100 N. 20th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103.

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**Green Scene subscriptions are part of the membership benefits for:**

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*the green scene / january 1997*





# 1997 Pennsylvania Horticultural Society Gold Medal Plant Award Winners

by William Heyser

These five 1997 winners add to the impressive list of 46 outstanding woody plants to receive the Gold Medal Plant Award. Evaluators for the Award look for winning trees and shrubs in the region from New York City to Washington, D.C.

## *Acer palmatum dissectum* 'Tamukeyama'

For eight years I have had the pleasure of serving on the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Gold Medal Plant Award Committee. Twice a year I've participated in the discussions with some of this area's — if not the country's — most learned horticulturists, whose knowledge leaves me in awe. These years of service have proven to be a great education for me.

Committee members work at various arboreta or nurseries or in their home gardens. As the only landscape contractor in the group, my role is that of the pragmatic businessman looking for plants that will not rapidly outgrow their allotted space by the front door of a residence or in a shopping-mall entrance, will do well planted in this region's high clay content topsoil mixed with some organic material, will have little or no disease or insect problems, and are easy to maintain and attractive year-round. Not too much to ask, is it? This year's chosen plants have these qualities.

### *Lace leaf japanese maple*

Introduced in 1710, 'Tamukeyama' is hardly a new kid on the block. Fairly well-known in the trade, it was chosen because it may be the easiest to grow and the most durable of the red *Acer palmatum dissectum* group. It is pollution-tolerant and has very few pest or disease problems. 'Tamukeyama' should not be planted in heavy clay soil. It prefers a well-drained, acid-to-neutral soil.

This tree performs well in medium shade. Its best chance at longevity, and best foliage, is in good indirect light, best attained if planted under high-limbed, deep-rooted shade trees, or on a building's north or northeast side.

It reaches to 12 ft. in height and spread in 50 to 100 years. Nurseryman Tom Dilatush says, "Sometimes 'Tamukeyama' grows faster than its owner expects in its youth, making it necessary to prune the plant to keep it in proportion to its site. 'Tamukeyama' responds well to pruning that maintains its natural shape by removing small branchlets. Never remove more than a fifth of its foliage area once every two to three years."

With red lace-like foliage on an intricate



twiggy domed or mounded frame, it's a very attractive tree. Though not a candidate for the open expanses of a new development, it's a spectacular visual delight in the right setting. Featured on a low mound with large native boulders, 'Tamukeyama' highlights any landscape.

Photographed at Brookside Gardens in Wheaton, Maryland, in late September.

photos by Larry Albee





## Buxus 'Green Velvet'

### Hybrid boxwood

Wouldn't it be great if there were a boxwood that didn't discolor in the winter, stayed compact, was shunned by deer, grew in sun or shade, was easy to maintain with a June pruning, had no serious pests or disease, and had good year-round color? Well, here it is! *Buxus* 'Green Velvet' is a workhorse for borders and hedges.

"The purpose of the Canadian hybridization and selection effort that yielded 'Green Velvet' was to combine the deep green foliage color of European boxwood with the greater insect and root-rot resistance, soil-type tolerance, cold hardiness, and compactness of dwarf Korean boxwood," says Tom Dilatush. The Canadian efforts certainly paid off with 'Green Velvet'. It is a welcome replacement to *Buxus sempervirens* 'Suffruticosa' (dwarf English boxwood), which is easily injured. 'Green Velvet' grows to 2½ ft. in full or partial sun and shade. It prefers moist acid or neutral soil and has no serious pest or disease problems.

Steve Hutton of The Conard Pyle Company says that they have experimented with many boxwoods over the years and have concluded that 'Green Velvet' is the best. Deer-weary suburbanites should welcome 'Green Velvet' with open arms.

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*Steve Hutton of Conard Pyle says that they have experimented with many boxwoods over the years and have concluded that 'Green Velvet' is the best. Deer-weary suburbanites should welcome 'Green Velvet' with open arms.*

---

Evergreen *Buxus* 'Green Velvet' is easy to maintain, disease resistant, and does well in less than perfect conditions. Beat that! (Photographed at Longwood Gardens in August.)



photos by Larry Albee



## *Juniperus virginiana* 'Corcorcor'

photos by Larry Albee



### 'Corcorcor' Emerald Sentinel™

As you drive through the upper reaches of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, you'll see fields of volunteer native red cedar. This hardy volunteer is not often used in man-made landscapes. I've tried using red cedar several times, always ending up unsuccessful — it thins out, turns brown, etc. We can thank a New England propagator, Clifford Corliss, for discovering and developing Emerald Sentinel™.

Dick Lighty, director of the Mt. Cuba Center for the Study of Piedmont Flora, thinks it's about time that *Juniperus virginiana* be recognized as the broadly adapted, tough, needled evergreen that it is. 'Corcorcor' is the cultivar that will win this species its place in the American landscape." It has many uses in both formal and informal plantings and can be used as a hedge, in a mass planting or screening, or as a specimen. An important requirement is full sun for at least half a day. 'Corcorcor' is both heat- and drought-tolerant, which makes it a useful plant in open, unshaded new construction areas. The director of Scott Arboretum, Claire Sawyers, adds that this species is highly adaptable and underutilized in gardens.

Although it prefers neutral soil, 'Corcorcor' will tolerate acid or alkaline soil. With no serious pests, it bears abundant smoky blue-gray fruit, which birds enjoy. It may reach 25 ft. in height and 6 ft. in width. Deer enjoy it, and it is host for cedar-apple rust.

5

Used as a hedge or a specimen, 'Emerald Sentinel', a native juniper, performs well in almost any setting. (Photographed in Chester County in August.)





## *Koelreuteria paniculata* 'September'

photos by Richard Hesselein

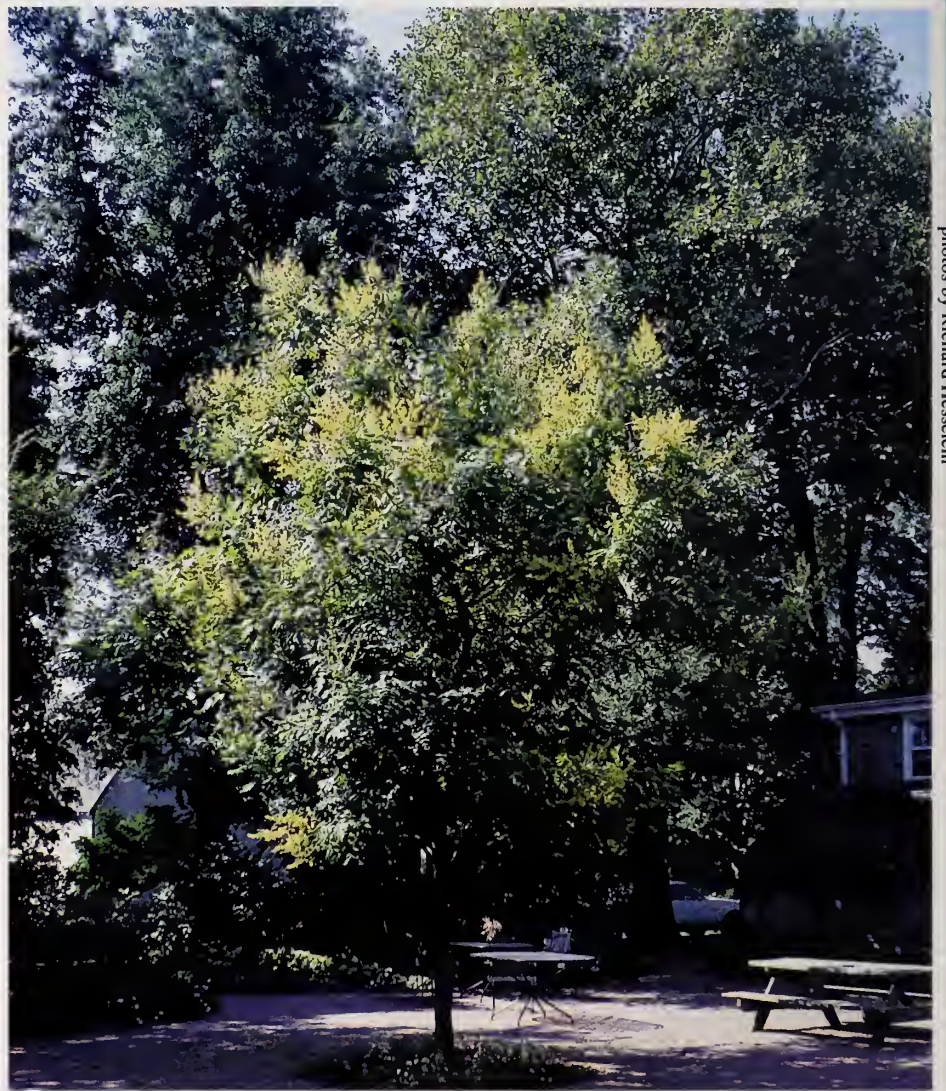
### *September golden rain tree*

Magnolia blossoms in April, crabapples in May, Kousa dogwoods in June, golden rain tree in July, Japanese pagoda trees in August, and now a golden rain tree in September. Six months of glorious color!

A medium-size tree (30 to 40 ft. high × 30 to 40 ft. wide), *Koelreuteria paniculata* is rounded in shape and sparingly branched. It has no serious pests or diseases and tolerates pollution and salt. Its brown bark becomes ridged and furrowed with age. 'September' prefers sun and moist, acid soil but will tolerate dry, neutral, or alkaline soil.

After Labor Day, when you get the feeling that suddenly summer is gone and winter can't be too far away, 'September' showers you with yellow flowers. Shortly afterwards it develops pink to rose seed capsules that make excellent dried bouquets that last for years.

Tom Dilatush states, "This cultivar is especially enjoyable, as it provides colorful yellow flowers later in the season than most others of its species. The flowers scatter all over the tree in very sunny locations, but when it grows among other trees, its flowers are produced only on its sunny top.



Bloom begins in late August and brightens the garden through September, when few other woody plants are in flower.



### **J. Franklin Styer Dies** **Originator of the Gold Medal Plant Award**

Enthusiasm and passion for people and plants were the hallmarks of Dr. J. Franklin Styer's life. On January 1, 1996, the plant-loving community lost a leading member when Dr. Styer died at the age of 95.

An active participant in the Philadelphia Flower Show and The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, Dr. Styer's career centered around getting great plants into people's gardens. A premier peony hybridizer and nurseryman, he owned J. Franklin Styer Nurseries in Concordville, Pa., for over 49 years, retiring in 1973.

In 1978 Dr. Styer provided funding to PHS to begin a program that would award outstanding woody plants. Ten years later, after planning a framework for the program and evaluating plants, the first Gold Medal Plant Award winners were announced and the work of promoting superior woody plants with the gardening public and the nursery industry went into full swing.

After his retirement Dr. Styer remained active in the Gold Medal Plant Award program, entering plants, checking nomenclature and guiding the program with a visionary's eye. We will miss him.

Kathleen A. Mills  
Gold Medal Plant Award Manager



## Magnolia kobus stellata 'Centennial'

---

*'Centennial' produces an outstanding flower display. If its moment of glory is brief, it is the showiest brief moment in the magnolia family.*

---

photos by Larry Albee



### Star magnolia

I am almost always disappointed with the magnolias that herald spring with a showy fanfare of spectacular blossoms, and are invariably gone in a day or two to a late frost or high winds. 'Centennial' overcomes this problem by producing an *out-standing* flower display. If its moment of glory is brief, it is the showiest brief moment in the magnolia family. The moderately frost-resistant flowers emerge white with a pink fringe, maturing to all white.

The tree is a slow grower, with a dense oval 15 ft. to 20 ft. spread. It needs full to partial sun and can be planted in moist to dry acid, neutral, or alkaline soil. Pollution tolerant, it has no serious pests or diseases. Claire Sawyers reports that for the last few years the plant at Scott has been "truly outstanding . . . A cloud of flowers that gets everyone's attention when it's in bloom. It has a nice rounded habit and is heavily laden with blossoms."

According to Tom Dilatash, "'Centennial' transplants well, prolifically produces attractive, many-petalled white flowers that attract more attention than those of most star magnolia cultivars."

Judith Zuk, president of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, observed star magnolia in a year when frost hit as the blossoms were opening: "'Centennial' kept unfurling petals that essentially masked the outer browned petals. The overall effect was lovely, in contrast to the *Magnolia × soulangeana*, which were totally spoiled."

Well, what do you do with something so beautiful yet potentially fleeting? You do what people do with night-blooming cereus: When you know the buds are about to pop and stun everyone with a soul-lifting profusion of large white blossoms, you break out the lawn chairs, uncork the wine, and invite your friends for a memorable 'Centennial' Day. Enjoy the show.

'Centennial' signals spring with a profusion of white flowers at Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College in April.





## Viburnum 'Conoy'

### Viburnum 'Conoy'

I look forward to using *Viburnum* 'Conoy' on many projects. An attractive hardy viburnum, easily maintained at 3 ft. to 4 ft., it blooms in April or May with fragrant pink flowers that turn white. Its leathery, dark green leaves are evergreen. The fruit is red, which turns to black. It prefers full sun but tolerates shade, prefers dry soil but tolerates moist soil, prefers acid soil but tolerates neutral soil. It is pollution-tolerant and has no serious pest or disease problems. It requires very little maintenance.

To quote Dick Lighty, "Another of the top quality viburnums from the late Dr. Donald Egolf, perhaps the best ornamental shrub breeder to have practiced in the United States. 'Conoy' was tested mercilessly for resistance to disease, then evaluated at multiple sites in North America for broad adaptability." He adds, "'Conoy' shows promise of becoming a real work-horse plant for a variety of landscapes, even serving as a tall shrubby groundcover or a low hedge to restrict pedestrian traffic. 'Conoy' is fully hardy in the mid-Atlantic states. Released in 1988, this plant is becoming popular with the nursery trade because of its reliable performance and undemanding nature, as well as its undoubted ornamental quality." Tom Dilatush adds, "'Conoy' is a neat, shapely, relatively low-maintenance shrub with small shiny dark green leaves and pleasing flowers." I expect 'Conoy' to become as popular as cherry laurel (*Prunus caroliniana*).

*Viburnum ×burkwoodii* 'Conoy', the last selection of Dr. Egolf's breeding program at the National Arboretum, will grow in almost any condition, takes heavy pruning, and delights with white flowers followed by red fruit.



photos by Larry Albrec



## How to Enter a Woody Plant in the Gold Medal Plant Award Program

It's easy . . . many gardeners have a woody plant that performs well in their gardens. One that looks great, and manages to outwit pests and disease with little care or attention. These are the plants the Gold Medal Plant Award evaluators want to hear about. To enter a plant for consideration please call (215) 988-8800 or fax us at (215) 988-8810 for an application form.

— **Submission deadline is November 15.**

- Three landscape-sized plants must be accessible to the evaluating committee.
- Plants must be hardy from New York City to Washington, D.C.
- A program of propagation must be underway.

## Where to Find Gold Medal Plants

You've got to have *Buxus* 'Green Velvet' for your garden, but don't know where to buy it.

Write to PHS for your Gold Medal Plant Award Source List, or pick it up in the PHS Library.

Wholesale and retail-mail order sources are listed for 1997 and previous winners. Cultural information and descriptions are included. Send a 52-cent SASE to:

Gold Medal Plant Award  
The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society  
100 N. 20th Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19103-1495

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## Gold Medal Plant Award Winners 1992 through 1996

<i>Abies nordmanniana</i>	<i>Cornus kousa</i> × <i>C. florida</i> 'Rutlan' Ruth Ellen™	<i>Magnolia grandiflora</i> 'Edith Bogue'
<i>Acer griseum</i>		<i>Magnolia</i> 'Galaxy'
<i>Acer triflorum</i>	<i>Crataegus viridis</i> 'Winter Red'	<i>Picea orientalis</i>
<i>Aesculus pavia</i>	<i>Crataegus viridis</i> 'Winter King'	<i>Prunus</i> 'Hally Jolivet'
<i>Cephalotaxus harringtonia</i> 'Prostrata'	<i>Cryptomeria japonica</i> 'Yoshino'	<i>Syringa reticulata</i> 'Ivory Silk'
<i>Cladrastis kentukea</i>	<i>Halesia diptera</i> var. <i>magniflora</i>	<i>Viburnum dilatatum</i> 'Erie'
<i>Clematis viticella</i> 'Betty Corning'	<i>Heptacodium miconioides</i>	<i>Viburnum</i> × <i>burkwoodii</i> 'Mohawk'
<i>Clethra alnifolia</i> 'Hummingbird'	<i>Ilex</i> × <i>meserveae</i> 'Mesid' Blue Maid™	<i>Viburnum</i> 'Eskimo'
<i>Cornus kousa</i> × <i>C. florida</i>	<i>Ilex verticillata</i> 'Scarlett O'Hara'	
'Rutban' Aurora™	<i>Ilex verticillata</i> 'Winter Red'	

For a **complete** list of Gold Medal Plant Award winners, send a SASE to: Gold Medal Plant Award, The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, 100 N. 20th Street - 5th floor, Philadelphia, PA 19103-1495.

William Heyser is C.E.O. of Heyser Landscaping, Inc., Norristown, Pa. He is a graduate of Penn State University and a licensed landscape architect. Heyser Landscaping, Inc. does exterior landscaping, interior landscaping, landscape maintenance, and tree work in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, and New York.





# Tracing Flower Shows through 100 Years of Postal Cards, Metered Messages and Stamps

**Philately:** The collection and study of postage and imprinted stamps

1.



by Suzanne L. Haney



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



7.

For years the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society has used the postage meter to announce the Philadelphia Flower Show and its dates. In doing so, PHS was following a century-old tradition of using the postal service to publicize a horticultural event. The methods by which historical flower and garden events have been promoted via the post have changed over the years. This process has paralleled both changes in postal trends and practices, as well as the evolution of the modern horticultural event, culminating in the Philadelphia Flower Show.

## Flower Show history

Our modern flower show combines elements of various 19th Century traditions: the Public Winter Garden, the Exhibition Park, and the Continental Gartenschauen.

Private collectors had often exhibited their plant specimens. The Dutch are reputed to have held competitions during the tulip craze of the 17th Century. Early plants, however, were shared with a select few and not readily available to the public. The Philadelphia Flower Show of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, believed to be the earliest in the United States open to the public, was first held in 1829 at the Masonic Hall on Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

The 19th Century exhibition of new and exotic plants, dissemination of horticultural

information, reports by botanical explorers, and the explosion of new and modern technology raised the public's excitement and expectations. Anything was now possible, and the public clamored to see all. The competitive classes as we know them came into being with the formation and growth of the garden club later in the 20th Century.

On the Continent the Gartenschauen was both a public recreational park as well as a commercial entity. These were outdoor venues, and like the Crystal Palace or Winter Gardens venues, were for major social events. Occupying many acres, they were open throughout set dates during the summer months. An outgrowth of local town competitions, the first was in Dresden in 1887, and the second in Hamburg. Tourists traveled daily to visit, see, and enjoy these outdoor garden shows.

Both post card and stamp collecting were immensely popular in the latter half of the 19th century. Both followed recent developments in printing technology and the formation of the Universal Postal Union, which lowered and equalized somewhat the cost of mailing cards and letters. These two factors combined a 19th century version of mass marketing: the subscription service. These were set up by post card publishers to mail colorful picture cards from exotic locales and events, using local stamps and often special cancellations.

1. Monte Carlo 1973 International Flower Show issue, picturing Ambrosius Bosschart floral painting.
2. Flower and Stamp Exhibition, Köln, Germany, June 1957, one set of four.
3. Fourth National Orchid Exposition, Rio de Janeiro, November 1946.
4. 1964 International Botanical Congress, Great Britain. One of a set of four.
5. Paris Flower Show 1959 publicity issue.
6. 1955 Istanbul Flower Show 10 kurus value. One of set.
7. Istanbul, Turkey, 1960 Flower Show. One of a set of four.



## Milestones in Garden Show History

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| 17th Century          | Tulip competitions by Dutch collectors   |
| 18th & 19th Centuries | British parish and manor house “fetes” or harvest shows                            |
| 1813                  | Private Winter Gardens built on Continent  |
| 1829                  | First public flower show in the U.S. by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society     |
| 1846                  | Regents Park Wintergarden by Royal Botanical Society                               |
| 1848                  | Palm House built by Kew Gardens  |
| 1851                  | Crystal Palace at Great Exhibition in Hyde Park                                    |
| 1855                  | PHS Annual Exhibition under tents at Penn Square, Philadelphia                     |
| 1863                  | First PHS Fall Show at Academy of Music  |
| 1866                  | International Horticultural Exhibition and Botanical Congress, Kensington, England |
| 1876                  | U.S. Centennial Exposition, Philadelphia   |
| 1879                  | Toronto Botanical Garden Show  |
| 1884                  | Autumn PHS Exhibition held at Pennsylvania State Fair                              |
| 1887                  | Dresden International Garden Show  |
| 1888                  | First Temple Show, Charing Cross, England  |
| 1889                  | General Federation of Women’s Clubs formed   |
| 1890                  | November Chrysanthemum Show replaces PHS Fall Show                                 |
| 1891                  | First Garden Club organized, Athens, Georgia                                       |
| 1893                  | Horticultural Hall at the World Columbian Exhibition, Chicago                      |
| 1913                  | First modern Chelsea Flower Show   |
| 1913                  | Garden Club of America organized in Philadelphia                                   |
| 1916                  | National Flower Show held in Philadelphia  |
| 1924                  | First PHS Flower Show at the Philadelphia Commercial Museum                        |
| 1929                  | National Council of State Garden Clubs, Inc., founded in Washington, D.C.          |
| 1947                  | International Flower Show held in New York City                                    |
| 1966                  | First PHS Philadelphia Flower Show at the Philadelphia Civic Center                |
| 1972                  | Vienna International Garden Show   |
| 1996                  | PHS Philadelphia Flower Show at the Pennsylvania Convention Center                 |



Color postal cards were also printed by contract licensees for garden shows and other events. These are differentiated from picture post cards as postal cards and had preprinted stamp images imprinted, and needed no additional affixed postage stamps to mail. Most were from Bavaria, Austria, and Germany. In the United States the 1892 World Columbian Exposition series were best known. An advantage of the postal card was that it could be sold at kiosks at fairs or garden shows “ready to go.” Contractors sometimes even printed the same card in both forms (with and without franking) so that the customer would have a choice.

1. **At top:** 1897 Hamburg, Germany, picture post card of Gartenbau Show.

2. **Above:** World's  
Columbian Exposition,  
Chicago, 1893; card mailed  
from Niagara Falls, 1893.





1. 1897 Hamburg Gartenbau label. 2. 1917 St. Louis Spring Flower Show label. 3. 1934 Rose Show, June 23 to Oct. 10, 1934, Uetersen, Germany.



Herbert Parvin, Esq.  
7 Nelson Pl.  
Newark, N.J.

Below: 5 and 6. Fund raising stamps: 1936 Barcelona "Feria Comite"; Shows grounds and gardens.



### Garden Show labels

Those who wished to send messages more privately in an envelope could purchase colorful "show labels." These were privately printed for numerous fairs, expositions, and special events, including Gartenschauen. These brightly printed, often multicolored, glossy papered or embossed "stamps" were actively collected in their own right. In the 19th century, postage stamps, telegraph, revenue, and these "event labels" might be sold at the same shop and put into the same album. A person might collect trade fairs, royal coronations, or floral garden shows.

The printing innovations of these event, charity, or patriotic "Cinderellas," were in stark contrast to the postage stamps of the period, which were usually limited to one-color engraved or two-color lithographed images. Part of the constraint on postage stamps was that, unlike labels printed by competitive printers in small runs and using techniques in the vanguard of technology, stamps were the product of government, royal, or state printing houses. The politics of stamp design, selection, and suitability were also factors. National pride, tradition, and constraints as to how posterity would view *avant garde* or inappropriate issues had to be considered. The economics and time necessary for a multiple year postage stamp, limited passing events to those of royal, state, or national significance. A mere flower show or garden show did not so rate.

Initially, these brightly colored labels, a.k.a. Cinderellas, often were affixed to the card or envelope next to the requisite postage stamp, as was often done with early Christmas seals or T.B. stamps. Increasingly, postal authorities required these labels be placed in positions other than the upper right hand quadrant of the card or envelope. This coincided with regulations disallowing postage stamp placement on the picture side of the post card.

### Garden Show meters

Fancy pictorial and slogan (or message) handstamps came into popular rise in the 1930s for special events such as flower or garden shows. The "rolling cancel" automatically would cover the entire upper width of an envelope. Gradually, because of demand for "clean" unsmudged covers by collectors, the cancel was applied to just the stamp portion of the card or envelope. Mid-nineteenth century "fancy" cancels had been quite popular locally in the United States, but were not widespread in Europe, where postal regulations were more centralized. Pictorial or slogan cancels at fairs, expositions, charities, and flower and garden shows changed that. This change was accelerated by the First World War, where patriotic interchangeable cylinder use was expanded.

Like modern Olympic committees vying for designation as the next venue, cities in various counties competed for "Garden Show" status. Likewise, local committees

issued fundraising stamps to help defer the cost of a fair or a show. The 1936 Barcelona "Feria Comite" issued a set picturing the grounds and gardens. The May 30-June 14 event was to kick off a summer of events at the Catalan capital. An Olympic Games alternative to those scheduled in Berlin later in the summer was canceled due to the unsuccessful *coup d'etat* that resulted in the Spanish Civil War.

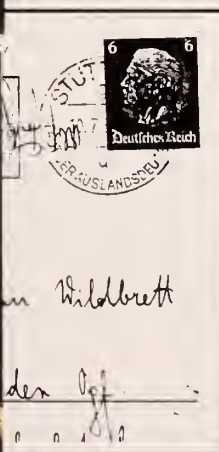
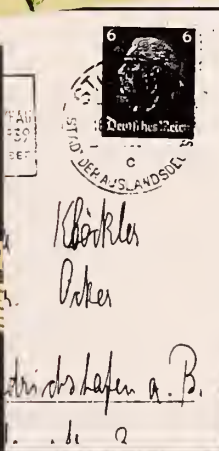
### Cachets and official photos

Brightly colored, hand painted or printed "cachets" on the left hand side of the envelopes had been popular since envelopes had replaced folded letters in the mid- to late 19th century. By the time of the U.S. Civil War, "Patriotic Covers" were printed by both sides, and were in common use. Later printed "cachets" included immensely popular advertising covers, which could be multicolored or even embossed with raised ink formulas. These could be sold on site or sent by subscription from flower or garden show vendors.

Gradually, by the late 1930s, special event postage stamps and more commemoratives began to appear. Those were limited, however, to major fairs or congresses of national pride or international significance. The early printing techniques continued to be engraved — one- or two-color lithographs. During the late 1930s the Gartenschauen and other national events attained tremendous stature and were a source of great national pride in Germany. Profes-



Left top: 1938 Gartenschau pictorial cancel, "Drucksache" printed matter rate handstamp. Left bottom: Handpainted cachet from Seville, Spain, Junta 1936, featuring gardens at the Exhibition Fair Grounds, opened in competition with the "Feria de Barcelona." Probably ordered on subscription commission basis, sent certified from Angarda, Spain.



Above: A selection of postage stamps issued for horticultural and flower show events.

Professional "fine art" quality photography, designated by Third Reich authorities, replaced possibly inferior quality products produced by competing post card printers. Some of the post cards and postal cards produced during this period are the only record of the designs and visual presentations of plantings in gardens totally destroyed by the war.

continued

Above: Professionally produced "fine art" publicity cards of Reichs-Gartenschau at Stuttgart, 1939. A variety of special garden show cancels were used if posted at the show.

the green scene / january 1997





1.

2.

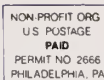
3. VISIT 1996 FLOWER SHOW  
FEBRUARY 25-MARCH 3RD  
PA CONVENTION CENTER



4.



VISIT 1996 FLOWER SHOW  
FEBRUARY 25 - MARCH 3  
PA CONVENTION CENTER



1. Holland, Michigan, pictorial meter, 30 April 1952 promoting May tulips. 2. World Flower and Garden Show meter, Chicago, Illinois, March 16-24, 1963. Mute denomination on meter indicates specimen or floor example. 3. 1996 Philadelphia Flower Show meter indicating Show dates and new venue at Pennsylvania Convention Center. 4. Pre-printed bulk rate meter for Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and the 1996 Flower Show. Slogan logo identical to franked meter.

sional "fine art" quality photography, designed by Third Reich authorities, replaced possibly inferior quality products produced by competing post card printers. Some of the post cards and postal cards produced during this period are the only record of the designs and visual presentations of plantings in gardens totally destroyed by the war.

### Horticultural event stamps

With advances in printing technology, more multicolored postage stamps began to appear in the 1950s. Postwar recovery and tourism, national pride and independence, and discovery of the potential revenue from sales, promoted an explosion of new issues. Postwar baby boomers worldwide collected stamps, and the resumption of international air and train travel allowed visitors to attend fairs and garden shows, and other events of limited duration. The time to publicize them via postage stamps was at hand. Few topics were more universally appealing than images of flowers or plantings at horticultural events. They were not politically contrived and were immensely marketable. These floral stamps were even issued for Mother's Days, New Years, and national holidays.

Eventually, a stamp or set of postage issues of a flower or planting became so common that garden and flower show organizations sought ways of differentiating their events from just another pretty floral image. The day of the limited pictorial cancel, which could be personalized to a given text, had arrived. Thousands of

events in numerous countries could be each individually noted, publicized, and commemorated. The collection of such cancels even spurred a new philatelic specialty: Mophila.

### Meters into the 21st Century

As modern technology and communications enter the 21st century, new postal methods are advanced. Postal authorities in many countries promote the meter as more efficient and cost effective for both businesses and customers. The publicizing of garden and flower shows has kept pace. The meter, which has been around since the 1920s, could now be individualized on cards, envelopes, and tapes. The 1996 PHS Flower Show announcement was even preprinted on bulk rate mail making it appear as though it had been individually applied.

### PHS postal history

If in a drawer in your desk you still have a card or letter with the slogan meter of last year's Flower Show at the Convention Center, take it out and hold it in your hand. You are holding a piece of both philatelic and garden show history. And as you attend in 1997, think back to the small number of years that have passed as our modern flower show, led by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, has come into being. Remember and enjoy every sight, scent, and moment of our most singular, special, and internationally renowned Philadelphia Flower Show, as it continues a philatelic as well as horticultural tradition.

## Glossary of Philatelic Terms

- Bulk Rate:** Discounted postage, often preprinted or by permit
- Cachet:** Design on envelope, such as special event or advertisement
- Cancellation:** Obliteration indicating stamp or postal card has been used
- Cinderella:** Not a postage stamp but a label
- Commemorative:** Stamp issued for special event or commemoration
- Druckache:** Printed matter/Advertising printed matter preprinted item usually mailed at discounted rate
- Fancy Cancel:** Pictorial cancellation or handstamp
- Franking:** Postage paid or rate charge for mailing
- Handstamp:** Cancellation or overprint applied by hand
- Imprime':** Advertising printed matter preprinted item usually mailed at discounted rate
- Issue:** Single or multiple stamps released on theme or for special event
- Labels:** Cinderellas of advertising, fund raising, special event, or patriotic nature
- Meter:** Prepaid postal marking in lieu of affixed stamps
- Philatelic:** Pertaining to stamps, stamp collecting, or postal items
- Pictorial Cancel:** Cancellation with picture
- Post Card:** Card, usually with picture, needing stamp to pay postage
- Postal Card:** Officially produced post card with franking imprint
- Rolling Cancel:** Cancellation across top of envelope using automated equipment
- Slogan Cancel:** Cancellation with phrase, slogan, or advertisement
- Stamp:** Officially produced, affixed stamp to pay postage
- UPU:** Universal Postal Union

Suzanne L. Haney is an avid gardener and PHS volunteer at the Philadelphia Flower Show and other events. She attended WIG '74, the Vienna International Garden Show. She is an accredited American Philatelic Society National Judge of stamps and postal history. She has received national and international Gold for exhibits, as well as the prestigious APS Research Award. The author of numerous articles on Spanish, Latin American, Ottoman, and military postal history, she currently chairs a committee to reconstruct destroyed philatelic documents for the Bosnian State Archives and National Library.



# Reliable Pond Plants Provide Beauty with Little Effort

 by Peg Castorani

The response to the *Green Scene* July issue about water features in the garden was such that we asked water specialist Peg Castorani, who wrote "Let There Be a Water Feature" for that issue, to write about plants for stocking ponds. Castorani is proprietor of Gateway Landscaping & Garden Center in Hockessin, Delaware, and assures us that readers can find aquatic plants that add special beauty to any garden with great ease. For water gardeners looking for a bigger challenge, Peg has added a special list for graduate growers.

**I**magine the idyllic life of aquatic plants. They do not have to struggle in varying environmental conditions to claim the resources they need to thrive. Lounging in a nutrient-rich aquatic environment, water plants thrive and reproduce effortlessly. A lot of sun, a little nitrogen — and life is good. Perhaps this is part of the allure of water gardening; so much beauty with so little effort. Aside from a few moments attention in spring and fall, aquatic plants ask for a little regular fertilizer and nothing more.

An extra bonus is the contribution aquatic plants make to the health of the pond they inhabit. Plants with floating leaves shade the water, stabilizing its temperature in the heat of the summer and deterring algae growth. Marginal plants live on the pond shelf. They are often heavy feeders that take nitrogen out of the water, helping to keep it clear as they grow and bloom.

During daylight hours, plants oxygenate the water through photosynthesis, creating an atmosphere for aquatic life to thrive. Proper stocking levels of submerged oxygenating plants will starve algae from your pond, providing you with the maximum enjoyment of your clear pond water.

The array of plants that thrive in the water garden seems endless. Each offers its own unique texture, shape and color to the total effect of pond design. While I admit to choosing plants solely because of their beauty, I try to keep in mind how their presence will affect the pond long term. Knowledge of their growing habits and cultural needs will make your choices easier too. I have organized my plant selections based on their cultural requirements and growth habits.

**Water Lilies/Floating Leaf Aquatics:** Plants with leaves floating on the water surface, and roots either potted or left free floating.

**Marginals:** Plants that prefer wet soil with up to 6 in. of water over the crown, unless indicated. Marginals have upright foliage or foliage that trails across the water surface.

**Submerged Aquatics:** Perhaps the most important pond plants, they grow in depths of 1–3 ft. I find they perform best with no more than 2 ft. of water over their crowns. These plants are used to oxygenate the water, prevent algae and provide a spawning area for fish.

Water lilies captivate the heart with their dazzling blooms, which they seem to produce effortlessly from June to September. There are lilies to please every palate; day-blooming lilies that are either tropical or hardy, tropical night-blooming lilies, lilies grown for fragrance, and miniature lilies. As most ponds can only accommodate a few, choose your lilies thoughtfully. Consider their ultimate size, their foliage characteristics, their depth requirements, their light demands and your hardiness zone. Or simply purchase the ones you cannot resist.

## *Hardy Lilies*

- Hardy lilies live in the pond all year but must be kept from freezing solid.
- Blossoms open from approximately 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for three to five consecutive days.



'Walter Pagels' dwarf white water lily.

photo by Peg Castorani

## WATER LILIES



# Reliable Pond Plants

• Plant size is determined not only by the breeding but also by the size of the planting container, the fertility of the soil, the amount of water movement near it, and the amount of sunlight the plant receives.

• Hardy lilies require fertilizer every two to four weeks to produce the maximum blooms. At Gateway, we fertilize with a tablet that must be inserted below the soil level to prevent it from dispersing into the pond water. A formulation of 10-14-8 has proven very successful. These tablets are available where you shop for your other aquatic needs. Cease fertilizing in September.

• Most thrive in full sun; a few varieties perform well in part shade.

• Overwinter your hardy water lilies in the deepest area of your pond. Simply cut back the foliage as it naturally dies back in the fall, until leaf production has ceased. Ponds up to 3 ft. deep may require a pond de-icer to keep the pond from freezing solid. This is rarely a problem in ponds at 3 ft. and deeper. In spring, raise your lilies to the plant shelf or an area with only a couple of inches of soil over the rootstock to promote leaf growth. Fertilize every two to four weeks and slowly lower the lilies as they become lush with foliage.

Here are some of my favorite water lilies (*Nymphaea*).

'James Brydon' is unmatched for its reliable crimson-red blossoms. The color of a red water lily may fade in intense heat, but 'James Brydon' holds its color very well even on our hottest days. This lily is equally at home in a pond or patio garden. The 5-in. flower is cup-shaped with a slight fragrance. New foliage is reddish-purple that matures to deep green. This lily will also grow beautifully in a part-shade pond.

'Chromatella' is a free-flowering plant that blooms cheerfully in every pond. I consider this lily an easy grower that produces lovely blooms of creamy yellow throughout the growing season. The foliage is green, mottled with purple, providing an excellent background for the pastel color of the flowers. 'Chromatella' is another water lily content to bloom without the benefit of full sun.

When discussing yellow hardy water lilies, I cannot pass over 'Texas Dawn'. The deep yellow blossoms are large (6-8 in.) and stand well above the water surface drawing all eyes to its beauty. The mottled foliage spreads up to 10 ft. per season. This plant will produce many blooms at the same time creating a stunning display of color. 'Texas Dawn' will not disappoint

you, its flowers are fragrant and prolific. Grow 'Texas Dawn' in a medium to large pond to maximize its effect.

'Joey Tomocik' is a new yellow variety that rivals 'Texas Dawn' for its sunny blooms that stand 5-6 in. above the water surface. The flower color is slightly richer than 'Texas Dawn'. Its foliage is similarly mottled, but does not spread quite as far. 'Joey Tomocik' will bloom well in part shade as well as full sun. I love both of these fabulous plants and cannot choose between them.

This is the first year we potted and sold the dwarf white waterlily 'Walter Pagels'. This lily grew quickly with a glossy green foliage and produced creamy white blossoms. Recommended for a small water garden or half-barrel, it's an easy lily to grow.

'Gonnere' is a white hardy lily that I find irresistible. It's often called 'Snowball' because of its large pure white flowers. A vigorous grower, it's notable that its blossoms remain open until late afternoon when many other varieties have closed. Plant 'Gonnere' in full sun and it can grow to 6 to 12 ft. spread.

'Hollandia', a double pink hardy lily, has been selected year after year for its beauty. The big double pink blossoms are simply outstanding. There are many new lily introductions every year, but 'Hollandia' continues to maintain its popularity. Plant this lily in medium to large ponds and do not hesitate to cut the flowers for indoor use.

'Mayla' is the hottest lily on the market. The blossoms are almost a fluorescent pink. Place in full sun and be delighted with its brilliant color. 'Mayla' can be seen at Longwood Gardens and is available with a little searching.

Changeable hardy lilies are aptly named due to the development of color in each flower over three to five days. Most changeable lilies come in the soft shades of apricot, yellow or orange. 'Comanche' buds appear a rich apricot that develops a coppery tone as the flower matures; it prefers a full sun location. 'Paul Hariot' is a small changeable lily with fragrant blooms of only 4 in. Initially the petals are orange. By the third day, the flower has a lovely pink cast. Mature plants bloom freely and are excellent choices for a tub garden or small pond.

## Tropical Lilies

Tropical lilies are so generous with their blooms; I guarantee you will never regret

purchasing one or more. Tropical lilies bloom more profusely than hardy lilies and for a longer season. The flowers are larger than hardy lily flowers and stand majestically above the water surface. The fragrance of the flowers will draw you to the pond both day and night. The foliage of tropical lilies generally has a greater spread and offers a greater variety of textures and patterns. Flowers of creamy yellow, pink, white, red, even tones of blue and purple entice you to have one for your daily pleasure.

Overwintering your tropical lily is challenging but not impossible. After two light frosts (not killing frosts) lift your lily from the pot, remove all the foliage and examine the tuber. If the lily was grown in a large pot, there may not be a tuber at all and you will have to replace it the next year. If a hard tuber is found, treat it with a fungicide and store it in damp sand in a sealed container until spring in your refrigerator. Bring it out in April and place the tuber in a plastic bag of warm water in a sunny window. Once the leaves have sprouted, plant the tuber in a small pot. Remember tropical lilies need a lot of light and water that maintains a temperature above 72°F both day and night. An ideal place for your lily is a greenhouse. Before placing in the pond, plant your lily into a larger container for the growing season.

Many day-blooming tropical lilies are viviparous in their reproductive habits, e.g. they produce young plantlets from the center of the mature leaf. Some plantlets will even produce a bloom. These offspring may be removed along with the attached part of the adult leaf and potted in small pots to develop a root system to support itself. Viviparous lilies also bloom later into the fall, being more tolerant of cool weather.

• Tropical lilies may not be placed in the pond until the water is 72°F day and night.

• Day bloomers open from mid-morning until dusk.

• Night bloomers open at dusk until mid-morning. On cloudy days flowers may remain open all day. Cooler autumn temperatures allow the blossoms to stay open even longer.

• Tropical lilies prefer shallow water in our Zone. Only 3-6 in. of still water over the rootstock will encourage a constant supply of blossoms.

• Plant tropical lilies in large pots of topsoil. Add a small amount of aged manure and sand.

• Tropical lilies require regular fertilization with an aquatic plant food every two



weeks during the growing season. We use, with great success, a formula of 10-14-8 (available at your garden center). Stop fertilizing six weeks before the first projected frost to harden the tuber for overwintering.

- Most require full sun for maximum bloom. A few varieties bloom with as little as three hours of direct sunlight.

These are some of the tropical lilies we have found easy to grow and that perform well:

'Texas Shell Pink' is a night-blooming water lily of impressive proportions. Its star-shaped blossoms of up to 8 in. are pale pink and delightfully scented. The deep green leaves are slightly ruffled on the edge. It will bloom beautifully in a partly shaded pond as well as full sun.

'Dauben', a tropical day-blooming lily cherished for its ability to bloom in shade, has petals of a lovely hue of pale blue with lavender tips. A petite variety with heart-shaped leaves, 'Dauben' blooms later than many other tropical lilies in the fall due to its viviparous nature.

'Tina', a medium-sized day-blooming tropical lily with petals of deep violet, catches the eye with its yellow center and violet petals. 'Tina' is also viviparous with an extended bloom season.

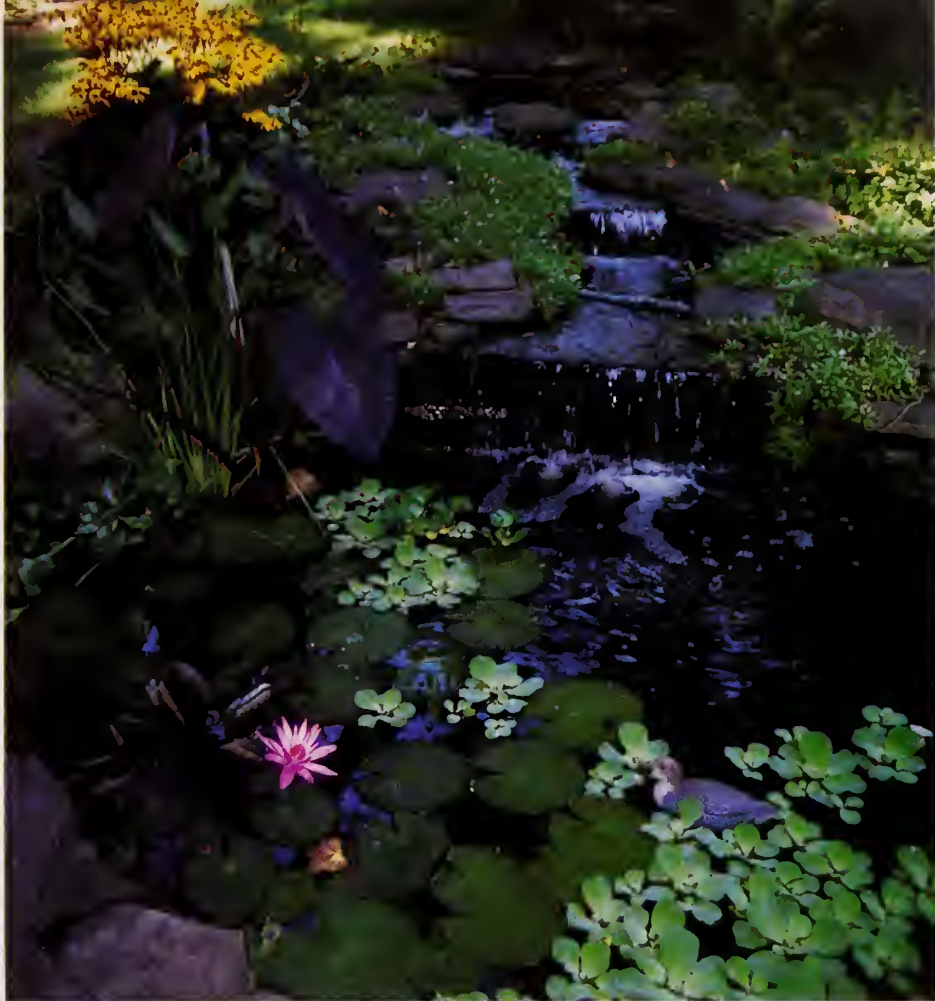
'Red Flare' is a truly exciting addition to the pond. Deep maroon leaves complement the red blooms that stay open all night. As with all tropicals, the blossoms are held above the water surface. 'Red Flare' flowers may stand up to 12 in. above the pond. This is a superb selection for any small, medium or large pond.

'Blue Beauty', a popular day-blooming tropical lily, has been selected for its abundant lilac-blue blossoms. Large, fragrant flowers and lightly speckled foliage make this plant a winning choice for any medium to large pond.

'Wood's White Knight' creates a glow in the pond after dark. Pure white flowers scent the night air. These fragrant flowers bloom over a long season, midsummer through autumn. Glossy green foliage makes this plant a special addition.

'Maroon Beauty': a specimen planting for your pond. This night bloomer produces rich red-maroon color flowers that stand regally above the water surface. The foliage has a tint of bronze to its deep red color that I find stunning in the pond.

'Mrs. George C. Hitchcock' is a lovely pink night-blooming lily with flowers that grow as large as 10 in. in width. Often the blossoms will stay open on an overcast day. Bronze foliage accents the deep pink color



Tropical lily 'Texas Shell Pink' blooms in shaded pond along with marginal plant *Colocasia* 'Black Magic' and floating leaf *Pistia stratiotes* (water lettuce).

of the flowers. Good for medium to large ponds.

'Missouri' is said to produce the largest of blossoms (12 in.) if given sufficient fertilizer. Green foliage and creamy white blossoms are simple but beautiful. Free-flowering and fragrant it will make a delightful show in any large pond.

There are a few tropical lilies that I love from afar. Lilies that I plan to grow in 1997. Keep your eyes peeled for these selections:

'Leopardess' — Incredible foliage of lustrous green streaked with maroon. Vivid, deep blue blossoms. Day blooming.

'Green Smoke' — A day-blooming lily with a rare chartreuse color; its green foliage mottled lightly with bronze.

'St. Louis Gold' has a deep golden flower that opens during the day. It is said to be an easy grower and free flowering. The foliage is a deep green with new growth splattered with purple. It's a good choice for ponds that can only accommodate a 5-ft. leaf spread.

## Water Lilies as Cut Flowers

Select a first-day blossom for cutting and

cut a short stem. Lilies will usually follow their normal blooming pattern after cutting. Night-blooming varieties bloom from dusk till mid-morning and day-blooming lilies will open from mid-morning until dusk. Sometimes the cut flowers behave oddly, closing and opening unexpectedly if the humidity is very high or their light conditions vary a great deal.

Always keep cut lilies out of the draft of an air conditioner or an open window. Day-blooming lilies can be held for an evening display if placed in the refrigerator with the stems in ice water. They will open for several hours after you remove them from the refrigerator. If you want to cut a lily when it is fully open, drop melted paraffin into the space inside the lily where the petals and sepals meet at the base. The paraffin will form an invisible cast to support the open blossoms.

**Best hardy lilies for cutting:** 'Hollandia', 'Virginalis', 'Carnea', 'Comanche', 'Chromatella', 'James Brydon', 'Escarboucle', 'Attraction', 'Gladstone', 'Gonnere', and 'Pink Opal'.

**Best tropical lilies for cutting:** Night Blooming: 'Wood's White Knight', 'Red Flare', 'Emily Grant Hutchings'. Day Blooming: 'Robert Strawn', 'Aviator Pring', 'Blue Beauty', 'White Delight'.





Lotus require a medium to large pond to display their spectacular foliage.

## FLOATING LEAF AQUATICS



This collection of plants contains a great deal of variety. Almost enough to make you think about pond #2 or #3. Generally, floating leaf aquatics are less expensive than water lilies and yet they perform some of the same functions. Lily-like aquatics contribute to the pond design with their variety of textures, shapes, and colors. They also provide shade to the pond's surface reducing the sun's penetration, which stimulates algae growth.

Overwinter your hardy plants in the deepest part of your pond with your hardy water lilies. The tropical varieties of lily-like aquatics suffer from the low-light intensity as well as cool water temperatures. We have successfully kept rooted tropical plants in the greenhouse until the following spring. Floating aquatics such as hyacinth and lettuce may endure until March when they are often lost. Because they are so inexpensive, I recommend starting with fresh stock every year.

*Aponogeton distachyus*: Water hawthorn is cherished for its delicate blossoms, which appear in early spring and again in the fall. During the cool spring of 1996 our plants flowered into early May before going dormant for the hot part of the summer. *Aponogeton* has narrow oval-shaped leaves, sometimes mottled with burgundy. The white blossoms are set off by black anthers. Water hawthorn is not too fussy, blooming in sun or part shade, in depths of 6-18 in. of water. Hardy.

*Azolla pinnata*: water fern. A lovely floating plant that can be invasive in the pond. Some fish may eat azolla, which will help curb its growth. Its texture is fern-like with a deep green color that turns red in the late summer and occasionally in the shade. Early in the spring, azolla provides shade to the pond while it's still too cool for water hyacinth and water lettuce. Hardy.

*Eichornia crassipes*: Water hyacinth, a boon to the pondkeeper because it absorbs tremendous amounts of nutrient from pond

## Reliable Pond Plants

water while providing valuable shade. Tolerant of full sun, I use it extensively in upflow biological filters also. To encourage the water hyacinth's beautiful blue flowers, enclose your plants in a piece of plastic tubing to contain them. I usually anchor the tubing to the floor of the pond or the wall to keep it in place. Water hyacinth reproduce quickly on runners and usually have to be harvested from the pond by midsummer. If you do not have fish in your pond, the hyacinths may need potting or feeding with a liquid pond food to keep them looking their best. Not hardy.

*Hydrocleys nymphoides*: Water poppy grows runners that cover the water surface creating luscious shade for your fish. The flowers are soft yellow and stand above the water surface. The shiny leaves are best planted just 6 in. below the water surface in soil with aged manure added. This is a good alternative to a water lily but it can be invasive. Not hardy.

*Marsilea mutica*: Water clover, a cheerful plant that children enjoy for its four-lobed leaves and adults appreciate for its easy maintenance. This tender aquatic does not require fertilizer and grows in sun or shade. It is an excellent choice for a smaller pond, as it is not too vigorous and will provide shade to the water in an economical fashion. Do not plant this one in a soil-bottom pond as it is invasive. I have grown this plant successfully in 3 to 12 in. of water. Marginally hardy.

*Nymphoides indica*: Water snowflake, an excellent alternative to a water lily for a small pond or tub garden. Both full sun and light shade are well tolerated by *Nymphoides*, which will reward you with small white flowers and variegated foliage of green and red. Not hardy. There are other varieties of *Nymphoides* on the market but this is my favorite.

*Pistia stratiotes*: Water lettuce is a beautiful floating aquatic that may be left to float on the pond surface or potted to boost its nutritional intake. Velvety ruffled leaves grow in a rosette formation and reproduce from shoots creating a cluster of plants. Allowing the roots to suspend from the plant without potting is the best choice in a pond with fish. These long roots absorb copious amounts of nutrient in the water that would otherwise fertilize algae. Water lettuce provides shade to the pond surface and fish will occasionally nibble at their roots. Place in part shade to protect the leaves from burning and fading. A dwarf form (*Pistia* 'Rosette') is available that is more ruffled and tolerates a bit more sun. A wonderful choice for a tub garden. Not hardy.

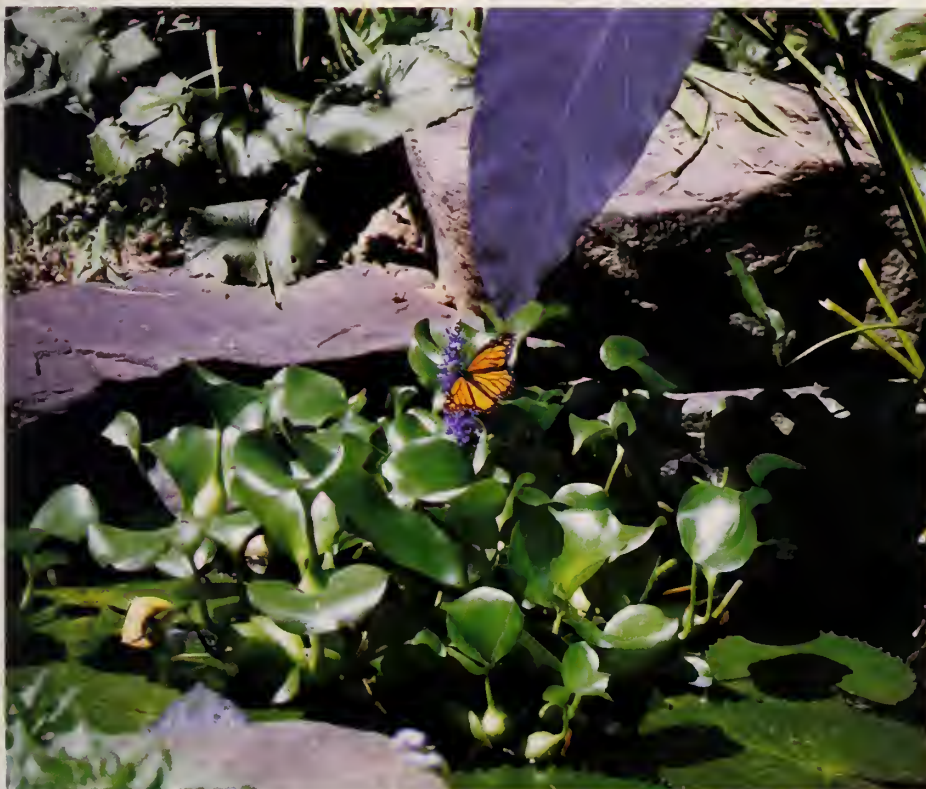


## MARGINAL PLANTS

photo by Peg Castorani



photo by Deanna Pilarelli



Top: *Pistia stratiotes* 'Rosette'. Bottom: Water hyacinth — Butterfly is perched upon blossom of *Pontederia cordata*.

For the purpose of this article, marginal plants are plants that have leaves or stems that rise above the water surface. Some are trailing types that intertwine with other plants, laying on or slightly under water. Others such as iris and cattails have vertical foliage. Bog plants are similar but will not tolerate water over the crown of the plant.

The hardy forms may overwinter on the floor of the pond or buried safely in your garden bed where they will not tip over and spill mud on the floor of the pond — or inadvertently squash a hibernating frog. Tropical varieties may spend the winter in a sunny room indoors or in a greenhouse. Fertilize tropical marginals with aquatic plant tablets if you wish to keep them vigorous or allow them to go semi-dormant in a cooler location. Cut the foliage down to just a few inches before placing in the pond and fertilize once in the spring.

There are hundreds of marginal or bog plants to choose from. Even some of our landscape plants may adapt suitably to an aquatic environment, such as *Phalaris arundinacea*, ribbon grass. All of these plants will perform better in large pots. Preferably pots that are wide and low. Here are 10 of our best:

*Juncus effusus*: Soft rush is a hardy accent plant with blue-green spikes. It grows to approximately 2 ft. and thrives in full sun to part shade. *Juncus* blooms with small brown flowers on the tip of its spikes. It is an excellent choice for small ponds and tub gardens because it is a moderate grower that will complement the scale of a smaller pond. The cultivar 'Spiralis' grows corkscrew-like stems and still maintains a very tidy form.

*Pontederia cordata*: Pickerel weed is a native plant with fleshy heart-shaped leaves and fabulous blue flowers borne on stalks that stand above the foliage. The glossy foliage grows to about 2 ft. and looks great throughout the summer. Plant this hardy selection in a wide pot by itself or with taller foliage to make the transition to the water surface gentle. *Pontederia* can overwinter in the bottom of the pond.

*Sagittaria latifolia*: Giant arrowhead is another easy-to-grow marginal plant. This native has showy white flowers with yellow centers in summer. The leaves are bright green and grow in the shape of an arrowhead. The arrowhead matures to approximately 2 ft. in height, which makes it a good choice for small and medium ponds. Combine it in a pot with larger plants in a big pond.

*Thalia dealbata*: Hardy water canna is a true specimen plant for the medium to large pond. *Thalia* has broad leaves like the tropical canna. The flowers are purple and



# Reliable Pond Plants

stand on tall stalks that rise high above the foliage. *Thalia* will be most successful in a large container and fertilized monthly during the growing season. Underplant with a trailing marginal plant to soften the transition to the water surface.

*Typha laxmanni*: Graceful cattail is a sister to the most famous water plant, the giant cattail. *Typha laxmanni* is treasured for its narrow leaf that sways gently in the breeze. Brown pokers will appear on the tips in midsummer. This is a hardy plant that is super easy to grow in any pond.

*Dichromena*: Star grass is a tropical sedge that grows bright white star-shaped flowers on its tips. The flowers will stay fresh all summer if the plant is cut back or deadheaded occasionally. Star grass grows to about 18 in. and will do well in any size pond. You may also use it as a transition plant from a tall foliage plant like cannas to a creeping marginal. Bring *Dichromena* into your house for the winter.

*Canna xgeneralis*: Longwood hybrid cannas are tender marginals that create an exotic presence with their big, bright flowers that bloom up and down the stem. Fertilize cannas monthly to encourage blossoms and to keep the foliage looking its best.

*Cyperus alternifolius*: Umbrella palm, a tropical plant that is quite elegant wherever it is planted. Stems grow to 4 ft. or 5 ft. with a whorl of leaves at the top of the stem, like an umbrella. They create a dramatic effect when reflecting on the water surface.

*Colocasia esculenta*: Taro is a favorite of mine. Big velvety leaves shaped like an elephant's ear nod over the pond water gracefully. It's available with green leaves, variegated leaves and an exciting deep maroon leaf. *Colocasia* grows tallest in full sun but also thrives in shade. A tropical plant that can be stored like a bulb all winter or left to grow in the house if room allows.

*Iris fulva*: a native iris that is the parent to hundreds of Louisiana iris that are becoming so popular. *Iris* 'Black Gamecock' is an offspring that has an especially beautiful flower of deep purple, almost black. This native plant will thrive in sun or part shade. The foliage grows to about 2 ft. and will tolerate up to 4 in. of water over the crown. A good plant to combine with a trailing marginal such as *Ranunculus* with its bright yellow flowers that bloom all summer.

## Trailing Marginal Plants

I recommend planting these aquatics in a large pot with a more upright marginal

plant. Fewer pots in your pond means less spillage, a critical concern if you want clear pond water. The fullness of the trailing marginal plants fills the base of taller aquatics, easing the transition to the horizontal plane of the water surface. Of course, if your plant shelves are built a minimum of 12 in. wide and 10 in. deep they will hold pots abundant with foliage and flowers. If your pond is rather large, build your shelves a couple inches wider and deeper. An added feature is that your marginal plants will also not need to be repotted as frequently.

*Mentha aquatica*: Water mint is a valuable plant in many ways. It will creep along the water surface, tolerant of moving water in the sun or shade. I use it in biological filters because it absorbs copious amounts of pond nutrients. I cannot fail to mention its delightful fragrance and tiny light purple flowers. Keep this native plant with water just over the top of the pot. Hardy.

*Myriophyllum aquaticum*: Parrot's feather is a delightful fern-like plant that trails over the water surface. Its habit makes it a great choice for a pond shelf, at the base of taller marginal plants. It also tolerates moving water rather well. Parrot's feather is a perfect tub garden plant as it will trail over the side of the container, softening its appearance. Grow parrot's feather in sun or part shade with 3-12 in. of water over the crown of the plant. This plant may be planted in just gravel so it will draw the maximum amount of nutrients from the pond. Fish love to spawn in the foliage and it will provide some shelter for smaller amphibians. Hardy.

*Ranunculus flammula*: Spearwort has been a tremendously popular plant in the Garden Center. Tiny yellow flowers cover the plant stems all summer as it creeps along the surface of the pond water. The stems will entwine around the base of taller marginal plants as a colorful accent. This hardy plant blooms best in full sun.

*Ludwigia palustris*: Creeping jenny is a hardy plant with showy yellow flowers and equally exciting shiny foliage. An easy-to-grow plant that needs a little trimming to keep in bounds. Fertilize only when repotting.

*Neptunia oleracea*: Sensitive plant is a playful tropical aquatic whose foliage closes when touched. Always locate this plant where small children can reach it easily. The stems of *Neptunia* are also interesting, made up of a spongy white tissue that floats without potting if you like. Sun to part shade is tolerated.

photo by Peg Castorani



*Elodea canadensis* provides a home to many pond visitors.

## Challenges for the Graduate Grower

Ready for a challenge in your choice of aquatic plants? Here are a few selections that will require slightly more attention but will reward you with their beauty.

*Nelumbo nucifera* or Lotus require 6 to 8 weeks of hot sunny weather to produce their spectacular blossoms. Place lotus in a still area of the pond where they will receive full sun. Lotus roots require large pots and rich soil. The tubers are very delicate and must not be broken when transplanting, which should be done in the spring. Fantastic foliage, stunning flowers and exotic seed pods will induce you to dig a pond just for lotus. There are several varieties of dwarf lotus that you may be successful within a small pond. Do not allow rootstocks to freeze in the winter.

*Iris laviegate* 'Variegata' is a lovely plant to add to any size water garden. Not a fast grower, this iris will happily stay in its pot for more than one season. Its creamy white and green striped foliage



## SUBMERGED AQUATICS



Customers gaze at our display pond at Gateway Garden Center and remark on the clarity of the water. All spring and summer, pondkeepers ask the same question: "How do you do it? My pond is never this clear!" I plant one clump of submerged oxygenating plants for every square foot of pond water surface area. For a pond 8 ft. by 5 ft., I use 40 to 50 oxygenators potted in groups of 25. This sounds like a lot of plants. If you have a biological filter or just a very few fish, try half this amount. My koi are large for the pond, and the submerged oxygenators balance the waste load placed on the pond water. In spring when plant growth is just beginning, your submerged plants will be in view. As soon as your lilies start growing, the submerged plants will be out of sight but performing the most vital of pond functions, providing oxygen to the array of life forms that reside there. Submerged plants are vital if you plan to keep fish.

In the late fall, cut back any foliage on the submerged plants that is not bright green. In mild winters, my *Elodea* plants will continue to grow. Cluster all the pots on the bottom of the pond floor to avoid spillage. They provide a safe space for small fish to hide and other tiny organisms to grow. Surprisingly these wonderful plants are also some of the least expensive plants you will ever purchase. Sold in clumps with a rubber band to hold the stems together, you may pot them in pebbles or allow them to drift to the bottom of the pond with weights.

*Elodea canadensis* or anacharis is my favorite submerged plant. It tolerates the coolest temperatures, absorbing the nutrients in the water that would be feeding the algae in its absence. Anacharis is at work before my biological filter is fully operational, which can take three to six weeks every spring. Anacharis provides a spawning area for my fish as the water warms. Anacharis is oxygenating the pond water after the pumps are turned off in the fall. *Elodea* has a deep green color to the stem and leaves that is extremely attractive on the pond bottom.

Another popular submerged oxygenator is *Cabomba*, a lovely plant with a delicate fern-like appearance. Tiny white flowers appear when the stems grow to the water surface. This oxygenator is lovely enough to select just for its beauty. Small fish love to hide among its branches and your bigger fish may nibble on the stems. I usually pot this plant in pebbles.

*Ceratophyllum demersum* is also known as hornwort or coontail due to the whorls of

leaves that suggest a bristle tail. This plant may float in bunches unrooted in your pond where your fish can play hide and seek through it. It is very hardy and easy to grow.

The leisurely life of aquatic plants creates a sense of repose and peace that draws us back to our ponds whenever possible. Exotic flowers beckon us to experience their perfume. Mysterious, hidden plants cleanse the water with their every breath. Foliage dances in breeze. The textures, colors and shape of each plant blends into the beauty of an aquatic composition that thrives without our constant attention. Ponds seem to move through the seasons with their own purpose and we become the audience for their effortless art.

### Suggested Reading

- The Pond Doctor*, Helen Nash,  
Sterling Publishing Co., Inc., New  
York, 1994  
*Water In The Garden*, James  
Allison, Tetra Press, Blacksburg,  
Va., 1991  
*Water Gardening*, Joey Tomocek,  
Pantheon Books, New York,  
1996  
*Water Gardening*, Perry D. Slocum  
& Peter Robinson, Timber Press,  
Portland, Oregon, 1996

All of the books listed above are  
available on loan to members  
through the PHS Library.

### Sources

- Gateway Garden Center, 7277  
Lancaster Pike, Hockessin, DE.  
(302) 239-7272  
Lilypons Water Gardens,  
Buckeytown, MD.  
(800) 723-7667  
Tilley's Nursery, The Water Works,  
111 E. Fairmont St.,  
Coopersburg, PA.  
(610) 282-1262  
Waterford Gardens, 74 E.  
Allendale Rd., Saddle River, NJ.  
(201) 327-0721

creates interest even after its  
lavender blooms fade.

*Ludwigia sidiodes* is one of my personal favorites, but I find it difficult to establish. The floating leaves are slightly square and arranged in a distinctive pattern that is lovely on the pond surface. The flowers are a rich yellow and approximately 1 in. in size.

*Nymphaea 'Gloire du Temple-sur Lot'* is a slow-growing hardy water lily. Grow it for the soft pink flower which can boast over 100 petals. This beautiful lily requires a large pot and should be placed at approximately 1 ft. of depth. If it is newly potted, it may take more than one year to produce its fabulous blooms.

*Lobelia cardinalis* or the cardinal flower is an easy-to-grow perennial that will adapt to the water garden. You will be most successful with this lobelia if you keep the crown of the plant above the surface of the pond in the spring. Once the stems are several inches high, submerge it slightly. The beautiful scarlet red flowers it produces in midsummer are a delightful addition to the pond shelf.



# THE HORTICROSTIC

Created by Richard L. Bitner

Here's a winter challenge for you — the horticrostic. The puzzle has a theme; it's about a plant family that is the glory of the winter garden. When the puzzle is completed, the player will enjoy an elegant quote from an article by a local writer and executive at an area horticultural institution (hint: no it is not the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society). The article appeared a few years ago in a nationally distributed publication. Complete pages 22 & 23 and transfer answers to page 24 to complete Horticrostic. **THE FIRST 10 PEOPLE WITH THE CORRECT ANSWER WILL RECEIVE A PRIZE!** (The contest will run until all prizes are awarded.) Entries will be marked numerically according to arrival at the *Green Scene* office. Here are the prizes:

1. A pair of Flower Show tickets
  2. A pair of Flower Show tickets
  3. A pair of Flower Show tickets
  4. A pair of Flower Show tickets
  5. A free ad in *Green Scene* (10 lines maximum)
  6. An individual membership to the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society
  7. A subscription (personal or gift) to the *Green Scene*
  8. A copy of *Gardening with Water* by James van Sweden
  9. A copy of *The Flower Garden: A Practical Guide to Planning and Planting* / The Wayside Garden Collection by Helen Dillon
  10. A season's pass (April to Oct., 1997) to Chanticleer in Wayne, Pa.
- Get to work; don't delay. the prizes will be awarded in the order winners arrive; no

substitutes please. Send your answers (be sure to keep a copy) to :

**Horticrostic**  
**C/o Green Scene, PHS**  
**100 N. 20th Street, 5th Floor**  
**Philadelphia, Pa. 19103-1495**

Include name, address, city & zip as well as phone number day and evening. Answers and winners' names will be published in the May issue of *Green Scene*.


Family of plant pictured and all plant answers	374	266	254	147	59	96	158	168	24	197	26	202	141							
Plant pictured; some types named for the holiday seasons	362	434	129	102	236	107	78	203	352											
Everyone's favorite gardening magazine	173	221	215	110	162	375	392	428	447	306	295	127	137							
Common name of this plant family	166	209	144	89	174	212	42	83	372											
Windflowers	232	233	414	98	189	105	8	17												
<i>Eranthis hyemalis</i> : hides for 8 months of the year	4	156	164	206	201	228	142	155	157	247	287	292	332							
Youth beloved of Aphrodite	274	245	348	333	289	271														
One type of plant pictured commonly called this (Brit.)	398	369	350	394	405	413														
Our club	30	111	122	150	180	75	120	170	242	237	319	318	376	378	359					
	419	444	445	284	257	303	270	315	382	370	364	386	440	134	192	62	5	91	33	124
A college teacher	416	82	171	176	92	160	77	101	178											
Provides songs for the CountrySide	404	108	65	6																
A type of soap for gardeners	125	135	27	36	12															
The cook's plants	145	231	50	84	19															
Big spring event sponsored by our club	193	129	146	186	132	71	85	205	198	118										
Seesaw, sometimes	7	14	51	112	95	136	191	207	249	252	268	360								
Weeds or beloved wildflowers, depending; blooms March-May with yellow flowers	267	361	441	291	175	234	219	305	301	277										
Annual delphinium	316	187	280	344	430	421	126	90												
Fiber derived from palm leaves used for tying	400	40	79	426	282	70														
A leaf with serrated margins	255	399	260	407	20	429	341													
A leaf without any of the above	309	406	276	293	41	244														
Never enough during gardening season	9	408	422	431																
Often kept in locked boxes	103	363	368	235	312															
Very useful chemical for a gardener, used with caution	43	285	409	69	300	230	44	88	345											



The dormant season	342 119 415 1 417 123														
Type of <i>Nigella</i> jewels	64 373 418 93 427 104 114														
Self-seeding spring flower with spurs, this Latin name means eagle	37 298 299 109 340 307 165 163 86														
Common name of above, it means dove	239 21 397 34 294 73 113 87 72														
The underground systems on which a fruit-bearing variety is grafted	35 296 328 121 371 45 74 179 259 290														
Long-handled tool with metal blades for loosening soil	81 269 46														
Gardens here need salt-tolerant plants	302 262 97 286 76														
This job is never finished	243 253 425 60 314 275 227														
Bears thin white racemes of flowers in September, this tall plant said to ward off fleas	94 34 10 100 63 53 99														
Latin name of Britain's native lemon yellow globe flower, enjoys damp meadows	321 339 177 315 316 345 49 390 263 190 29 279 161 432 304 216 217														
Clay container with holes at intervals around the sides for planting	326 423 433 384 313 365 320 325 412 188 272 248 385														
Latin name for marsh marigold	47 396 143 66 256 379 211 11 199 167 61 115 387 213 381														
A basal formation of leaves radiating from a crown	133 246 80 403 334 401 336														
Broom used by a conifer propagator	218 52 48 23 383 346														
Mouse-like insect eater with a pointed snout	391 347 138 388 349														
To separate chaff from grain by wind action	131 16 38 258 154 330														
Fall event of our club	438 18 210 351 446 159 220 25 149 250 22														
Leaf-like part of a palm or fern	172 310 130 377 13														
Applied to plants that are naturally tiny	39 337 229 264 128														
Latin for baneberry	58 153 288 240 439 139														
Common name of <i>Trollius</i>	148 57 338 169 152 297 273 28 281 442 140														
The only member of this family that knows how to climb	367 380 323 98 366 54 324 290														
A sign often found on CountrySide barns	116 68 32														
An act of opposition	151 389 208 238 214 204 420 393 241 31														
A leaf-like structure arising from the stem of a flower; sometimes brightly colored	311 357 18 303 354														
A type of caterpillar	181 3 15 222														
Another name these caterpillars are known by	329 36 443														
Old MacDonald had a farm...	183 184 224 225 146														
Organization of CountrySide high school students (abbr.)	251 261 343														
Flowers live here	265 356 106														
Thalictrum's common name is meadow	353 34 117														
Every plant's food manufacturer	143 117 229 278														
Classic favorite of gardeners by Frances Hodgson Burnett (see <i>Green Scene</i> , November, 1993, or <i>homeground</i> , Fall, 1996)	194 195 196 208 358 267 226 437 435 410 411 185 200 56 283														



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Phoebe with mystery plant.



Phoebe with mystery plant.



# Make Room for Plants of Promise

 by Cheryl Lee Monroe

## Eight People's Favorite Picks at the Perennials for the Landscape & Garden Center Industries Conference

**G**ood plant lists can elevate a plant lover's heart rate instantly, and one place where you're guaranteed a good list is at the Perennials for the Landscape and Garden Center Industries Conference held each year in October at Swarthmore College. The Promising Plants Forum is always a favorite. A Who's Who list of speakers, a brisk pace, a great list of new or underused plants and handouts with room for notes — what more could you want. Again this past October, the sponsors of the Conference, Cooperative Extension, The Pennsylvania State University; the Hardy Plant Society; Longwood Gardens; The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society; Pennsylvania Nurseryman's Association, Chapter E-1; and The Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College brought us a great group of speakers and the following plants.



photo by Karen Hertzog

Billowing *Stipa tenuissima* in the garden's center. See page 26.

**Dan Benarcik is horticulturist at Chanticleer in Wayne, Pa., and his choices sport great purple foliage:**

*Euphorbia dulcis* 'Chameleon' is a new selection, with excellent bronze foliage; its lime-yellow flowers contrasting wildly in early summer. It is a low, intertwining ground cover that will seed freely and builds up well in protected areas; cropped to the ground in summer, it will reward you with a second flush of leaves even deeper in color.

*Cryptotaenia canadensis* var. *purpurea* has bronze foliage, which looks smashing amidst hostas or wandering around contrasting beautifully with white, green and yellow foliage. It is a short-lived perennial, reaching only 3 ft.; it self-sows and is easy to pluck out.

*Clematis recta* 'Purpurea' gives you great blushed purple foliage at a perfect time, early spring. It will twine and sprawl through the garden, its white froth of fragrant flowers like icing on a cake, especially spilling over a garden wall. The foliage will revert to green later when it won't really matter.

*Euphorbia cotinifolia* is a tender perennial you can overwinter with protection or bring indoors. It's a small shrub or tree well worth the trouble; its grand purple foliage



photo by Dan Benarcik

makes it perfect in a large clay pot. If you're propagating, take cuttings in early summer.

*Euphorbia dulcis* 'Chameleon', a newer selection, brings great bronze foliage, partnered with crazy lime-yellow flowers.



# Make Room for Plants of Promise

**Karen Hertzog is a partner at Manheimer/Hertzog in Stockton, N.J., and she suggested several plants we should use more frequently:**

*Spodiopogon sibiricus* adds a strong, structural component to the garden, with rigid foliage standing 2-3 ft.; flower panicles reach 4 ft. Its strong stems hold the leaves at such an angle as to give the appearance of bamboo. The flowers seem to float above the foliage, which turns a purplish red in fall. It's slow to establish in the first season so don't be discouraged.

*Stipa tenuissima* is called mexican feather grass, its fine-leaved feathery grass at 1½ ft. looking like a flowing mane of hair, perfect with a little wind. Dormant in the summer, it will provide a new flush of foliage for fall if cut back. One special note on care — it can be invasive.

*Actaea rubra* has very sharply toothed deep green leaves and is 1-2 ft. in height. Its clusters of red berries are held on spikes rising above the foliage making a perfect combination in late summer. Preferring humus-rich soil, shade and cool temperatures, it is also poisonous.



photo by Karen Hertzog

*Stipa tenuissima* is texture at its finest; it is a good backdrop, perfection being just the addition of a little wind to ruffle it.

**Robert Herald is the gardener for the Hillside Garden at Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, Pa. He brought us a tough combination, plants that bloom in September in a fair amount of shade.**

*Impatiens balfourii*, related to *Impatiens capensis* (jewelweed) is — whoops — an annual — but it self-seeds, its seed pods literally bursting open. Blooming in late summer and into fall, its dangling white flowers are suffused with rose, quite different from the orange and yellow of *I. capensis*, the jewelweed in our streams and wet areas. It loves bright shade, the sun making it prone to wilt and a feast for Japanese beetles. This one is hard to find: write Herald at Longwood Gardens, P.O. Box 501, Kennett Square, PA 19348-0501 for seeds.

*Scilla scilloides* is an August-blooming bulbous plant with stalks of small starry orchid pink blooms. Dormant in summer, it makes its appearance late to fill in the gaps amongst azaleas, epimediums and ferns.

*Begonia grandis* 'Alba' is another selection making a late appearance each year, and you may wonder if you've lost it. A good foliage plant when summer wanes to fall, its flowers arise on long stalks and



photo by Robert Herald

*Impatiens balfourii* has sweet white flowers kissed with just enough pink to make them standouts, especially in late summer.

hang pendulously over its foliage. We usually see pink, but this is considered a white selection, its flowers really a pale pink, so pale as to qualify for white. Plant it with pinks however, as other whites give it a dirty appearance. It, too, dislikes sun, bleaching if given too much.

*Tricyrtis hirta* 'Alba' is another white-flowered selection; the species typically white blotched with purple. Angelic in

appearance, its stems arch over, the flowers standing out vividly in contrast to great green foliage unmarred by summer; its three-parted stigma looking all the while like a starfish. This performance starts in September and lasts till frost; the buds not appearing until late August. It will lean toward light, something to consider in planting. It looks smashing with the pink of *Begonia grandis*.



Jeff Jabco is director of Grounds for Swarthmore College and assistant director of Horticulture at the Scott Arboretum at Swarthmore College. He's been exploring:

*Thalictrum kiusianum*, a dwarf with foliage reaching 3 in. versus the 3 ft. of the meadow rue we commonly grow. It needs pampering, is not vigorous, but, rather a slowly spreading clump, preferring sun and declining when dried out. Your reward is six weeks of lilac flowers reaching only 4-6 in. come late June.

*Patrinia scabiosifolia* has open cymes, the flower color a fantastic sulfur yellow starting in late July lasting through August. The seed head follows behind; a pale yellow, it gives the illusion of flowers through the fall. The flowers stand well above the basal foliage and when cut will last weeks in a vase. When Jack Frost arrives its foliage will turn red, bronze and russet (even the stems oblige) all the while holding those seed heads. There's a good Japanese form, used widely in that country for cut flowers: *P. scabiosifolia* 'Nagoya'.

*Patrinia gibbosa* will be easier to find, and its flowers are similar to *P. scabiosifolia*. The flowers are the same sulfur yellow and start earlier in July lasting only two to three



photo by Jeff Jabco

*Patrinia gibbosa* is a super flower for July. Open and airy flowers; a great sulfur yellow.

weeks, its seed heads showing no merit. The foliage is straplike, it reaches 2 ft. and has the same excellent value as a cut flower.

*Patrinia villosa* is 2-3 ft. with basal foliage and is more stoloniferous than the

others; it will spread. It may need staking; however, it will flower later than the other *Patrinia*, from early fall into October. It's also white, not yellow, and perfect paired with something like *Festuca glauca* 'Elijah's Blue'.

Kathleen A. Mills is administrative manager of Shows, including the Philadelphia Flower Show, for The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. She brought us:

*Geranium sanguineum* 'Album', a white selection from a species grown widely for its magenta flowers. Its flowers are a clear white in June, blooming along into August if planted with some sun, and its habit is tighter than the species.

*Salvia transylvanica* stands some 5 ft. tall with heavy textured leaves and indigo flowers in June and July. A good cut flower, it will bloom until heavy frost if deadheaded and stays evergreen through winter. It will also take abuse, dry sites, and still self sows.

*Stachys officinalis* has dense pink flowers that look like pink soldiers marching around in July. Its white cultivar, *S. officinalis* 'Alba' has creamy white flowers and deserves attention; its 18-in. flower spikes are grand and best at the front of the border in summer.



photo by Kathleen A. Mills

*Salvia transylvanica*, a hardy salvia. Tall and tough, it will take poor soil and give you indigo flowers.



# Make Room for Plants of Promise

**Robin Parer is proprietor of Geraniaceae in Kentfield, California,** and specializes in a genus she reveres. She has two selections she'd like to suggest gardeners use to replace *Geranium endressii* 'Wargrave Pink'.

*Geranium* 'Ann Folkard' is a hybrid, its parents *G. psilostemon* and *G. procurrens*. It did not inherit one of the worst characteristics of its folks, it does not root at the nodes. You will have, instead, a clump of large chartreuse-yellow leaves in spring and flower stems that will roll and billow their incredible magenta-purple color through other foliage. It looks excellent amidst very dark-leaved foliage as well as screaming yellows and if cut back, will reward you again with another flush of chartreuse-yellow leaves. Very difficult to divide, you must rely on tissue culture. It's a great companion to *G.* 'Brookside'.

*Geranium* 'Brookside', a child of *G. pratense* and *G. clarkei* 'Kashmir Purple', grows well in the sun. Blue is a much sought after flower color and this fits the bill, its flowers blue, fading white towards the center. It inherits finely dissected leaves from *G. clarkei* and grows 2-2½ ft. in a large clump, its flowers held above on extended stems. If you lop off the old



photo by Robin Parer

flower stems, a new one will automatically take its place; cut the whole plant to the ground in midsummer and you will be rewarded with both new leaves and flowers. It's best divided by crown or root division.

*Geranium* × 'Ann Folkard', a vibrant chartreuse foliage rambling around amidst other plants, and snazzy magenta flowers peeking through the foliage of its companions, make this a super choice among the geraniums.

**Nelson Sterner is the director of Horticulture at Old Westbury Gardens in New York.** He gave us some bold choices to consider:

*Rheum palmatum* 'Atrosanguineum' is bold, its large leaves some 5 ft. across, deeply cut and red when they unfurl. The flowers do not pale in comparison; they are panicles of vivid crimson in early summer. The essentials here are lots of compost and a very moist environment, next to a pond will do.

*Phlox paniculata* 'Nora Leigh' you will either love or hate. It's not new, just underused. Its pale pink flowers have dark centers. Its foliage is wild, variegated; it has a brilliant yellow edge with green centers. Best yet, it withstands the assault of powdery mildew, showing none or very little.

*Cimicifuga ramosa* 'Hillside Black Beauty' is one up on *C. ramosa* 'Atropurpurea', another with dark foliage. The foliage is darker, a great dark bronze, its white flowers stand at some 3-5 ft. An introduction from the McGourty's at Hillside in Connecticut you'll have to travel there to see it; or try Wayside Gardens, which has a two-year exclusive on this treasure.

*Salvia scabiosifolia* is 3 ft. tall and has a

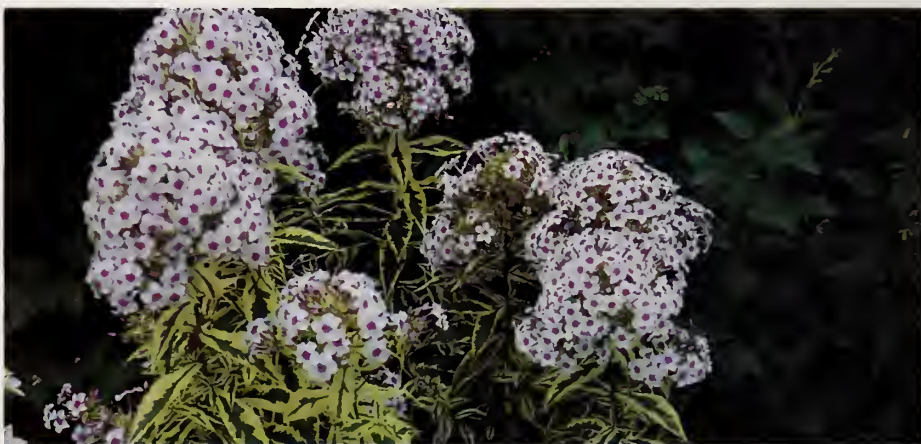


photo by Nelson W. Sterner

*Phlox paniculata* 'Nora Leigh' is for the wild at heart or some craziness in your garden. Its variegated foliage topped with grand pink flowers will steal the show.

sky-blue flower with a bit of white. In spring or early summer it pairs well with *Nepeta*, blooming over a long period of time. You'll need to stake this one. *Nepeta sibirica* 'Souvenir d' Andre Chaudron' is more compact than the species. Its flowers are a pale blue and stand tall at 28-32 in. blooming happily for several weeks in early summer.

Delphinium hybrids. Although an annual, many a perennial lover has drooled over this plant and Sterner gave away one of his

best secrets. Imagine taller delphiniums, 6-7 ft. and incredible 30-in. flowers that bloom later than most. If you are a member of the Delphinium Society of England you may have already discovered the secret. Hand-pollinated by the Society you will get the most glorious delphiniums come July if you've joined, ordered and sown them by December. The Society will even note on the packet what they expect you to get in the way of color.



John Story is manager at Meadowbrook Farms Nursery and Greenhouse, a private estate in Meadowbrook, Pa. He brought us:

*Aruncus aethusifolius*, related to and resembling astilbe. Dick Lighty of the Mt. Cuba Center for the Study of Piedmont Flora in Delaware, introduced it to this country from Korea several years ago. It's white astilbe-like flowers arise above a very compact 10- to 12-in. plant. It will self seed if it's at home in moist soil and partial shade.

*Baptisia lactea*, called *B. pendula* or *B. alba*, has a white legume flower appearing in June. We usually see the blue of *B. australis* but this white one with its purple stems and bluish-green foliage is equally as good, just harder to find. It takes time to get established, but is long-lived when it does and happy even in poor soil. The seed pods are just as grand, pendulous and purple, and when ripe will rattle in the wind.

*Verbascum* 'Sunset Shades' might be the one verbascum you can count as a perennial; the others qualify as biennials. After three years in Story's garden it has not declined. The foliage is basal, its 2½- to 3-ft. flower spikes have buds of different



ages, giving us rings of flowers and whorls of open places with immature buds all at the same time. The effect is excellent. If cut back after flowering, it will oblige by reblooming. It's easily grown from seed.

*Aruncus aethusifolius* is delightfully small, and at the edge of the border you can enjoy its 12-in. white astilbe-like flowers.

## Sources

Ambergate Garden  
8730 County Road 43  
Chaska, MN 55318  
(612) 443-2248 (\$2)

Busse Gardens  
5873 Oliver Avenue S.W.  
Cokato, MN 55321-4429  
(612) 286-2654 (\$2)

Canyon Creek Nursery  
3527 Dry Creek Road  
Oroville, CA 95965  
(916) 533-2166 (\$2)

Carroll Gardens  
444 E. Main Street  
P.O. Box 310  
Westminister, MD 21158  
(800) 638-6334 (\$3)

To write for Membership  
Information:  
The Delphinium Society  
Shirley Bassett  
"Takakkaw"  
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Surrey  
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UK

The Flowery Branch  
P.O. Box 1330  
Flowery Branch, GA 30542  
(770) 536-8380 (\$3)

Heronwood Nursery  
7530 288 N.E.  
Kingston, WA 98346  
(360) 297-4172 (\$4)

Niche Gardens  
1111 Dawson Road  
Chapel Hill, NC 27516  
(919) 967-0078 (\$3)

Plant Delights Nursery  
9241 Sauls Road  
Raleigh, NC 27603  
(919) 772-4794 (10 .32 stamps)

Wayside Gardens  
Hodges, SC 29695  
(800) 845-1124 Free catalog

Cheryl Lee Monroe, a frequent contributor to *Green Scene*, is a horticulturist who trades in plants in the time woven between her family and her garden. She resides in Myersville, Maryland.

Statement of Ownership Management and Circulation (Act of October 23, 1962, Section 4369, Title 39, United States Code)

1. Date of Filing: September, 1996. 2. Title of Publication: *The Green Scene*. 3. Frequency of issue: bimonthly. 4-5. Location of Known Office of Publication and Headquarters: 100 N. 20th Street, Philadelphia, Pa. 19103-1495. 6. Names and Addresses of Publisher and Editor: Publisher — Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, Philadelphia, Pa. 19103; Editor — Jean Byrne, 100 N. 20th Street, Philadelphia, Pa. 19103. 7. Owner: The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, Philadelphia, Pa. 19103. 8. Known bondholders, mortgages and other security holders holding one percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities: None. 9. Extent and Nature of Circulation:

	Average No Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Mos.	Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date
A. Total No. Copies Printed (net press run)	13,820	13,300
B. Paid Circulation:		
Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales	112	96
Mail Subscriptions	12,482	12,434
C. Total Paid Circulation	12,594	12,530
D. Free Distribution by mail, carrier or other means, samples, complimentary and other free copies	78	20
E. Free Distribution outside the mail (carriers or other means)	929	95
F. Total Free Distribution (sum of D and E)	1,007	115
G. Total Distribution (sum of C and F)	13,601	12,645
H. Copies not distributed		
Office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing	219	655
Return from news agents	0	0
I. Total (sum of G, H1 and H2)	13,820	13,300
Percent Paid and or Requested	93	99

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Jean Byrne, Editor



# The Stone Trough

*From sarcophagi to a home for alpine in our gardens*

 by Vickie Mowrer



photos by Vickie Mowrer

Lee Spiller's rounded granite trough. Lee's native stone troughs are free-form and show off some of the beautiful intricacies of nature such as this unusually embedded rock.

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Normally, we think of a stone trough as a large shallow, rectangular hollowed-out stone that sits majestically in someone's garden and serves as a receptacle or home to a collection of choice plants, usually alpine. Have you ever wondered about the origins of these beauties and why the alpine is the plant that managed to stake their claim? And if you did pose that question, wasn't the answer usually a vague reference about the troughs coming from England where they were used to water cattle and that alpine plants just seemed to grow best in them? Well, those facts are true, but there is more to the story.

The first users of these now precious garden ornaments were the Romans. They did not use them in the garden, but rather as sarcophagi, an ancient coffin (consisting of a chest and a lid). The oldest one known dates around 3000BC. The Latin word 'sarcodes' means 'resembling flesh' and the word 'sarcophagus' means 'flesh eating stone.' According to the Roman historian Pliny the Elder, this term stemmed from the use in ancient Egypt and Greece as well as prehistoric times of coffins lined with a type of stone with caustic properties that was believed to consume a corpse in 40 days. When Renaissance excavators un-

covered a multitude of these beautifully embellished sarcophagi, it's easy to see why some designers adopted them as forms of garden decoration.

Having found their way into the garden it is also easy to see why eventually gardeners began to use them as planters. They were a natural, although this transition took quite some time. Old troughs and sinks became popular as planters for two reasons. One, some of the specimens the plant explorers were bringing back from distant places were found growing on harsh rocky terrain with quick drainage. The stony shallowness of a trough allowed the gardener to more accurately mimic the exacting conditions of many of these treasures. Second, many of the most interesting and desirable plants from these rocky regions were rather small and needed to be viewed nearer to eye level to be appreciated. The primary reason that troughs are usually elevated by pillars does not have nearly as much to do with drainage, which is the normal assumption, but rather with visual accessibility.

Not many of the old stone troughs we see today began their life as a sarcophagus. Those that were sarcophagi are now usually missing their lids, and those that are intact are usually in a museum. Here are some clues to help you determine the age and

origin of your prize if you are lucky enough to own one.

Ancient Italian Etruscan stone sarcophagi (they also made them in terracotta) date from the 6th to the 1st century BC. These portrayed the recumbent effigy of the deceased individual or couple on their lids. A fine example can be seen at the Museum of Fine Arts, the di Vulci Sarcophagus (c400-350BC), in Boston. If you are in England, stop by the Wells Cathedral in Central Somerset where they have many sarcophagi on display, including children's.

Carvings became more ornate as time went on and by ADc100 Roman coffins were carved in high relief with representations of garlands, battles and mythological subjects and were presented as a sort of continuous narrative. Christian sarcophagi after AD400 replaced mythological and historical subjects with biblical themes and the narrative was supplanted by crowded, super-imposed scenes, or niches, separated by small columns, and enclosing figures.

More than likely what is in gardens are the troughs that were used as vessels to hold liquid for one reason or another: to water and feed livestock, to cool horseshoes for blacksmiths, to cool grinding wheels that were used to sharpen tools, to hold brine for salting pork, and to hold apples





**Top:** An antique cider trough. Originally there would have been a round grinding stone sitting in the middle. A donkey attached to the great stone walked around and around to facilitate the crushing of apples to extract their juice for cider. **Middle:** A 'farm trough,' probably belonged to a farmer who had the means to own quite a large herd of cattle. **Bottom:** An antique 'salter,' used to hold brine to cure bacon. Now it is the home for some humble plants in an Englishman's back garden.

that were crushed into liquid to make cider. Many smaller troughs were used as pump troughs. These can be identified by their one rounded side, which held a bucket into which water was pumped for household use. These troughs are not quite as rare as sarcophagi but they are no longer abundant either, which translates into high prices for the privilege of ownership. This fact, coupled with scarcity, led to a resurgence of hypertufa which, it turns out, is not exactly a 'new invention.'

The roots of hypertufa go back to a Mr. James who started the firm of Pulham and Son at Broxbourne, Hertfordshire in 1820. His father, who was also named James, was connected with the firm called Lockwood, which pioneered the manufacturing of Portland cement, made by heating a mixture of limestone and clay in a kiln and pulverizing the resultant clinkers. Portland Cement was named after Portland Stone, considered to be the very best building stone, which it resembles. Mr. Pulham originated the idea of making 'rocks' from cement and raised the process to a high art. We all know that many of the ornaments that are manufactured today from 'cast' stone do not fall into that category. The rocks Pulham created were naturally called 'Pulhamite Stone.' His rock gardens were quite the rage in Europe for about a 50-year period and his work still influences the design of rockeries today. Many of his creations are still standing. The best examples can be found in Bearwood, Workingham; Madresfield Court, Worcestershire, and in London at Battersea Park. These large executions were beautifully conceived and constructed essays in the 18th Century pursuit of the Sublime and the Picturesque.

Mr. Pulham's recipe for his stone, with various alterations, is really where the origins of hypertufa come from. Making these homemade containers is a bit messy but it can be fun and rewarding\*. Achieving a truly beautiful finished product is challenging and time consuming. There are excellent books about creating troughs from hypertufa with informative sections devoted to the best plants to use for trough planting.

Fortunately, a tiny handful of individuals here and abroad that are reviving the craft of carving troughs from real stone. Stone is magical and there is nothing like having a trough chiseled from a rock in which to create your miniature garden fantasy. The even bigger bonus is that these are affordable as well.

\*See *Green Scene*, September '82, page 15: Troughs: Making Them Lightweight and Portable by Jane G. Pepper.





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**Top left:** When a trough has one curved side you know that it was a pump trough. The curved portion was created to accommodate a bucket into which water was pumped for household use. **Top right:** An antique tool called a 'peck,' used to hollow out the insides of stone to create troughs. The tool used to square off the outside edges is simply called a stone axe. **Bottom:** This trough was mined by Mr. Heysom from his quarry in Purbeck, England, and carved into this beautiful Purbeck Limestone trough.

I met Lee Spiller at the Gift Show in New York City; his beautiful display of stone vases drew me right into his booth. Lee revealed that he hails from a picturesque village in New England. He moved there with his family when he was a teenager and never left. From that early age he was fascinated with the stone vessels used to water cattle and horses, that he found on farms and along the roadways. He also loved the granite rocks and boulders that he found everywhere (the bane of many a farmer's existence). Eventually Lee made a marriage of his artistic ability and his love of native New Hampshire granite and started a small company that specialized in creating vases from specimens that he gathers on spelunking expeditions.

When I met Lee he was thinking about

attempting to make stone troughs. I told him that he must, he must, he must. He is now collecting larger and larger stones on his expeditions as well as gathering rectangular antique granite foundation stones, which just happen to be in abundant supply right on his own property. His troughs are unique, beautiful and affordable. A piece that would be in the 2 ft. x 2 ft. range would cost about \$300. When someone wants to purchase a trough all they need to do is determine their desired size, shape and color and let him take it from there. The color range is greater than one might think. Now that Lee has gotten started he is on a roll. He intends to expand his repertoire to include Vermont marble and New Hampshire slate.

The second contributor to the world of

new stone troughs hails from England. I saw Trevor Heysom's work long before I met him. He is quite a delightful person and knowledgeable indeed.

Trevor mines the stone that he hollows into troughs from the quarry that he owns on the Isle of Purbeck, a wondrous place that I first read about in Graham Stuart Thomas's book called *The Rock Garden and Its Plants*. Look on a map of England and you will find Purbeck on the southwest coast jutting out into the sea. Trevor's quarry nearly falls right into the ocean. Being in a quarry is an interesting experience. If you have one in your neighborhood I recommend stopping by and asking someone to show you around. You can really get a glimpse into how the earth was formed and learn something about your



local geology. Also read Graham Stuart Thomas's book. It's a wonderful account of rocks and stones of the world and their relationship to the garden. I cannot praise it too highly.

As you can see from the photos Trevor's troughs look nothing at all like Lee's. His quarry produces a very sandy colored limestone. And it is the type of stone and its inherent qualities that dictate the finished piece. The artisan follows its lead, not the other way around. Like Lee, Trevor produces his troughs on a custom order basis. All he needs is an approximate dimension and shape. There is not much of a choice regarding color other than a bit lighter or a bit darker. Prices vary according to the size but \$350-\$400 will get you something that is about 1 ft. by 3 ft. and quite spectacular.

The last source is a fellow who lives in our neck of the woods, in York, Pennsylvania. His name is John Shelley, and I discovered him on the Internet. Shelly does not make his troughs from real stone, and I must admit to not having personally seen them. But after viewing photos on the Web and a few conversations, I felt it fair to include him. This man has an award-winning web page loaded with information about all types of gardens, gardening, plants, etc. Most of it, however, is about the troughs he makes and rock garden plants. These are his passion. If you are hooked up to the Internet, check out this site. The address is <http://www.gdctr.com>.

John Shelley's troughs are not the typical hypertufa substitute, but rather a Portland Cement concoction that I think must be based on the original recipes developed by Mr. Pulham. Shelley's troughs are very

affordable. One that is 36 in. long x 16 in. wide x 10 in. deep sells for about \$150. He also has an invention available for sale to help to *move* troughs. This ingenious contraption consists of steel poles, wooden stabilization blocks and straps that create a sturdy two-person sling. For a price of \$45, I think every trough gardener will bless him.

I am sure that there are other trough artisans out there that I have not discovered. The stone containers that are being produced in Japan from volcanic stone have not been included because as far as I could determine they are mass produced, and I was looking for the opposite. All the containers that have been covered in this article, however, are on display and for sale by special order at Beechtree Antiques and Gardens located just outside of the lovely village of Strasburg in Lancaster County (Phone: 717-687-6881). It is best to call for directions and to make an appointment as the proprietors are retired and the shop is open more according to their whim than a set schedule of hours.

There is an abundance of written material supporting the fact that the planting of a rock garden is as much an art as a construction. It requires a broad knowledge of plants, their proclivities and esthetic qualities. A landscape rock garden is not the best place for growing many of the small, delicate, demanding and choice little plants. These are best given their own domains in alpine houses and troughs. But no matter which plants are your passion, I will bet that rocks and stones will, in some way, be part of the environment you create to display them. A line from a booklet that

was printed by Mr. Pulham's firm is, I think, a suitable close. It says, "for it is where rocks most abound that the artist loves to dwell, the admirer of nature and the tourist delight to ramble."

### Book List

*Alpines in Sinks and Troughs*, Joe Elliot, The Alpine Garden Society, Woking, Surrey, England, 1981.

*The Classic Garden*, Graham Rose, Summit Books, New York, NY, 1989. ISBN# 0-671-68840-5

*Miniature Rock Gardening in Troughs and Pans*, Royton E. Heath, Transatlantic Arts Inc., New York, 1957.

*The Rock Garden and Its Plants*, Graham Stuart Thomas, Saga Press, Inc., Portland, OR, 1989. ISBN# 0-88192-139-4

Available on loan to members through the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society.

### For Additional Information on Trough Construction

Special issue, *Handbook of Troughs*, by the American Rock Garden Society. Available for sale in January '97. Write to The American Rock Garden Society, P.O. Box 67, Millwood, NY 10546.

Also in the PHS Library:

*The Bulletin of the American Rock Garden Society*

Volume 52, Spring 1994

(whole issue devoted to troughs)

Volume 48, Summer 1990 (pg.

220) Volume 40, Winter 1982

(pg. 9-12)

Volume 35, Summer 1977

(pg. 125-131)

Volume 22, Fall 1964 (pg. 99-103)

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Vickie Mowrer trained in art, floral decorating and garden design at Temple University, The Philadelphia School of Textile and The John Brooks School of Garden Design in England. She creates floral magic, gardens of merit and sculpture in the Philadelphia region and beyond. She may be reached at 215-482-7292.





## Planning for Year-round Interest in a Garden

**M**y gardening friend said I was crazy when I described my plan to create a garden in the center of Baltimore. Since the part of town where I live, a 19th-century neighborhood called Bolton Hill, is famous for its public and private gardens, the idea of a garden *per se* seemed fine. What so bemused my friend lay not in my plan's generalities but in its specifics, namely in my hope to create an urban garden where one could find something in bloom every month of the year.

But since I'd been called crazy before, I ignored the naysayer and set to work. When it came time to focus on what I meant to plant, I realized that since the point of having things in bloom was to be able to cut flowers (or berries or interesting foliage) for the house, it meant I'd better choose plants whose blossoms I like. This seemed a happy state of things indeed since I tend to like the sort of simple, "old-fashioned" flowers that virtually cry out to be cut: tuberose and hellebores, bluebells and monkshood, bourbon roses and lilies, asters and phlox and columbine, and if I could sneak in a few herbs, all the better.

Plant selection settled on (if only conceptually), I started to get to know the site. It's a small rectangle measuring about 20x40 ft.; its long boundaries are formed by the north and south lot lines, the east by my landlord's three-story 1875 brick rowhouse,

and the west by my residence, an 1880 mansard-roofed brick carriage house. While most of the garden received full sun, building placement (and seasonal variations in the sun's position in the sky) effectively divided the space into a garden with three distinct exposures — the quarter closest to the main house is essentially "semi-shady"; the quarter closest to the carriage house bakes in sunshine from mid-day until sunset; and the middle half receives "full sun," that is midsummer sun from (roughly) 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

In addition to its varied exposures (which allows for a great variety of plants), the garden is also blessed with almost incredibly rich black soil since those who had gardened here before me believed in the benefits of horse manure and treated the plot with a nursing of it each fall. Fortunately, Baltimore is ringed with sources for this wonderful, renewable resource and I have been able to continue the manure regimen. Periodic dosages of water-soluble fertilizer have proven useful as well, due to the high intensity of cultivation; a good heavy mulch is *de rigueur*.

Most important, I was not working from scratch for I "inherited" an established garden, albeit one that might be described as being a bit overgrown. Janet Roszel had gardened here between the 1920s and 1960s; when she died in 1968, the property passed to her youngest son, David (my landlord). Since he could be described as one who likes to look at plants but hopes they will be enterprising enough to take

care of themselves, the condition of the place might be imagined. Mrs. Roszel had laid out two beds that ran the length of the space, one rectangular to the south contained a background wall of box shrubs with coral bells, iris and spring bulbs; roses were in the foreground; ferns grew in luxuriant abundance everywhere. Then, across a 2-ft.-wide brick path laid out to connect the main house to the carriage house, lay a rectangular patch of lawn bordered by an L-shaped bed. The stroke of the L ran against the carriage house wall and here Mrs. Roszel had planted her much-beloved rose bushes as well as a solo spirea and masses of lily-of-the-valley, bearded iris, scilla, daffodils, and other proclaimers of spring. The beds also contained a few less-welcome plantings, including mint (planted in the '30s for juleps), ivy (planted to visually soften the foundation of the carriage house), and those triple banes of urban gardeners, volunteer tangles of rose-of-sharon, virginia creeper, and japanese honeysuckle.

### January, February & March

To fit in what I wanted, I had to double the size of the L-shaped bed by expanding it into the lawn to create a planting area that was a good deal more curvaceous than the original, but appropriate, I hoped, to the Victorian neighborhood. Once the enlarged beds were enriched with dug-in manure, I began planting. Now the garden's varied





Far left, page 34: A vividly hued brace of Exbury azaleas in early May shows how well chosen their name — Mount St. Helens — is. The azaleas are underplanted with *Iris reticulata*, tulips, camassias, regale lilies, forget-me-nots, lamb's ears, and late-blooming astilbe to ensure several months of interest in a small (5 ft. × 5 ft.) space. Right, page 34: Mid-May: the sunny garden becomes a rich tangle of roses including the pale pink 'Celsiana', the dark red 'Rosaie De l'Hay', and in the background the 'Bourbon Mme. Pierre Oger'. Left, this page: Planting the climbing rose 'Lawrence Johnston' so it intertwines with a 'Graham Thomas' honeysuckle means that the red brick walls of the carriage house will be smothered in fragrant yellow blossoms from the first week in May until July — sometimes in September and October as well, in years when the honeysuckle decides to rebloom. Right, this page: The rich yellow of David Austin's 'Graham Thomas™' is set off by the sprawling cranesbill geranium 'Johnson's Blue' and an unknown coral-colored polyantha rose.

# Baltimore Rowhouse Garden by Christopher Weeks

exposures proved their worth. For early interest there are dioecious hollies (*Ilex* 'China Boy'™ and 'China Girl'™), five hellebores, and some aconites in the area of semi-shade while witch hazel, winter heath, and drifts of snowdrops and *Crocus chrysanthus* offer up their blossoms as if to warm the February sun. Sweet woodruff, *Mertensia*, *Scilla sibirica*, *Iris reticulata*, a Japanese andromeda, and two varieties of daffodil ('Tete-a-Tete' and 'February Gold') can be counted on for March color.

## April and May

Daffodils appear reliably in early April, and I planted several varieties and species to continue the bulbous show into May, when they are joined by tulips (15 or 20 get planted each fall), *Scilla hispanica*, the aforementioned lily-of-the-valley, and a dozen or so camassias. (These last have made happy homes in the moist, slightly depressed part of the garden that formerly contained the property's outhouse.) With the bulbs as underplantings, April and May receive flowery height (and woody substance) thanks to mountain laurel, two fiery-colored 'Mount St. Helens' deciduous azaleas, and a fast-growing *Viburnum × burkwoodii*, whose scores of scented flower bundles draw appreciative comments from gardeners several houses away.

## Late spring and summer

All that sounds like quite a spring show. And, immodestly, in good years, it is. Even so, it's all really just an overture to what the

garden is all about — roses, which is just as it was in Mrs. Roszel's time. I, however, made one change: while Mrs. Roszel favored hybrid teas, I decided to go in for "old roses" and for their newly developed cousins, the varieties raised by David Austin. Still, as will be seen, who can resist hybrid teas all together?

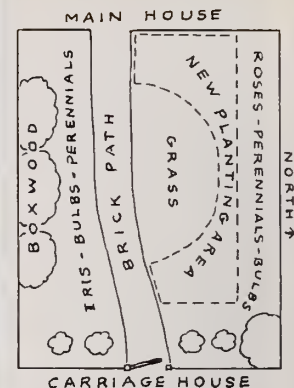
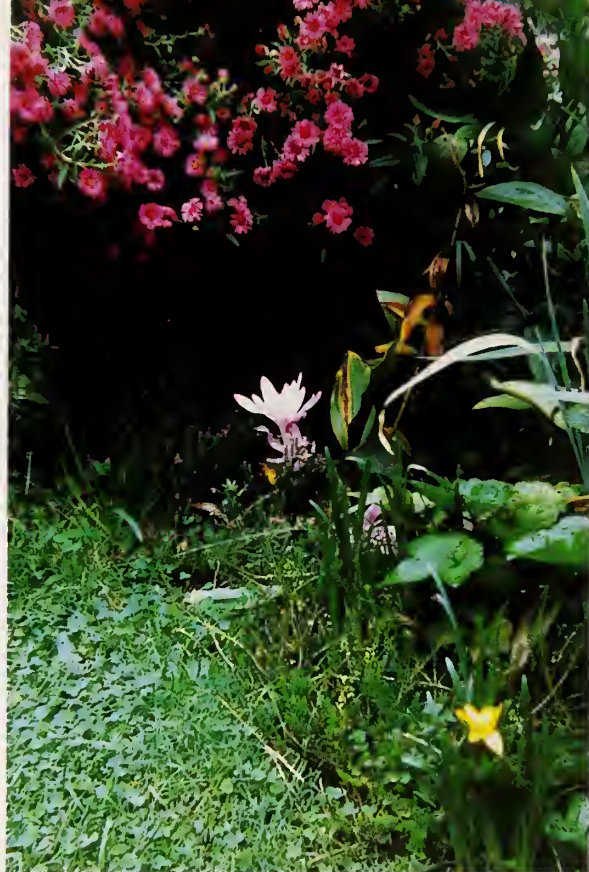
The rose year begins with the robust climber *Rosa foetida* 'Lawrence Johnston', which must be the most gorgeous and generous yellow rose ever. (Vita Sackville-West likened the color to "the best Jersey butter.") 'Lawrence Johnston' (a non-repeat bloomer) has now clambered half-way up the carriage house wall and to provide a later yellow interest, I planted a *Lonicera periclymenum* 'Graham Thomas' about three feet away. The two are now hopelessly and happily intertwined up the brick wall; the rose blooms in May and June, the honeysuckle from July to October. The undemanding *Rosa rugosa* 'Blanc Double de Courbet' starts its hoary show in mid-May, followed closely by David Austin's 'Mary Rose'™; then come (more or less in order) four Bourbons, the ancient damask 'Celsiana', and — new in the garden this year — the exotic 'Rose de Rescht', brought to Europe from Persia around 1905. Still, newer roses are allowed, and I have a climbing 'Tiffany' (to me the perfect hybrid tea) growing into a sprawling elaeagnus. Three of Mrs. Roszel's bushes have sur-

vived, too — the hybrid teas 'Helen Traubel' and 'Margot Koster', as well as one unidentified polyantha that looks like 'The Fairy' — or would, if 'The Fairy' had coral-colored blossoms.

While pride of place here goes without question to the *Rosa* family, I've also jumbled in a cottage garden melange of plants either to complement the roses or to fill in blank spots when non-repeat bloomers have finished. Thus, in no real order, one finds several stands of *Phlox paniculata*, a self-increasing number of Johnson's blue cranesbill geraniums, three sprawling asters, some daylilies, four spikey clumps of *Siberian iris*, four peonies, and dozens of come-up-where-you-will native columbines. I cram in as many real lilies as I can while the feathery blue plumes of annual larkspur, left to go to seed each year, wriggle up into the canes and stems. Some gray foliage seemed necessary to calm all this color, and accordingly lamb's ears and a half-dozen 'Munstead' lavenders tritely (but one hopes pleasingly) form quiet, gray mats at the bases of this billowing, multi-hued melange.

Since one does like to eat, in the best cottage-garden manner I've squeezed in annual and perennial herbs wherever I could. Some are to be used when fresh (e.g., lovage, chives, and, in pots, coriander); some are to be enjoyed fresh but also will be dried for later use (e.g., sage, tarragon, thyme, parsley, and pots of basil); rosemary





Left: *Sternbergia lutea*, *Colchicum* 'Waterlily', and the *Aster novae-angliae* 'Alma Potschke' brighten the garden during the cool days of early fall. Right: In the sunny part of the garden, witch hazel (*Hamamelis* 'Arnold Promise') braves the February snow each year; the misnamed daffodil 'February Gold' may be seen timidly emerging.

and bay — not reliably winter hardy here — are grown in strategically placed tubs to be taken in before frost.

### August, September and October

Around Labor Day, that is, just when the garden begins to look a bit tired, the place suddenly takes on a fresh, new look thanks to masses of white Japanese anemones, 'Autumn Joy' sedum, a trio of *Caryopteris* × *clandonensis* 'Longwood Blue', and haphazard groupings of naked ladies or magic lily (*Lycoris squamigera*), *Sternbergia lutea*, and colchicums (mostly 'Water Lily' and *C. speciosum*). For scent, I rely on a dozen or so tuberose (planted each year in the holes left vacant by discarded tulips) and a *Clematis paniculata*, which skyrockets up a trellis to the second story of the carriage house, across the door from the intermingled 'Lawrence Johnston' and 'Graham Thomas' duo.

One sprawling *Ligularia dentata* 'Desdemona', three monkshood, and masses and masses of hostas (*Hosta* 'Krossa Regal', *H.* 'Royal Standard', and *H. plantaginea* 'Grandiflora') add interest to the garden's shady areas from August to October, taking the place of earlier-blooming astilbes, sweet woodruff, bluebells — and one optimistically planted camellia. That poor shrub, dessicated each year by winter winds and half-killed every five years by cold, does manage to put forth a few browned flowers

each April. (I grow another camellia in a tub. It summers outside but winters over near a west-facing window in the unheated garage and is brought upstairs on sub-zero nights and during February, when I am away and the apartment is a cool 50°F — and it flowers beautifully in March.)

A few, final thoughts suggest themselves. First, while Mr. Roszel doesn't express interest in many flowers, he is partial to biennial hollyhocks; thus there will always be two of these plants in bloom each year (to be removed in the fall) and two more, newly planted, awaiting their year in the spotlight. (Of late, I've become fond of the black hollyhock [*Alcea rosea nigra*] but any single variety works well. What perverted demon forced double hollyhocks on us?) They get stuck in wherever there seems to be a spot, a manner of placement suitable to the informal nature of this agreeably homey plant.

Also, attentive readers will have noticed that I grow a *lot* of shrub roses; these are probably not ideal in such a small garden, but I like them too much to give them up. So I place them as best I can, trying to avoid planting the tallest ones near a walkway. I have also recently discovered the benefits of "pegging," that is, of encouraging the canes to grow horizontally by means of lots of stakes and "Twist-ems." This not only keeps the canes from swatting one in the eye, it also produces an even greater abundance of bloom, since "pegged" roses tend to send off flower shoots where free-flopping canes would send out leaves. And,

a firm believer in every garden's need for blue, I stuck in three or four forget-me-nots at the edges of the borders a few years ago — and now those lovely bluest-of-blue flowers twinkle all season long from alongside the border, between the bricks in the path, and from deep within the rose beds.

Believe it or not, in good years the above does actually produce something each month of the year. But I have to admit I do cheat — if one considers using houseplants as cheating. (Let's leave aside the issue of bulbs in the house — what would winter be without successive dishes of paperwhites and forced hyacinths?) I've already mentioned the pampered camellia. In addition, pots of *Daphne odora* 'Aureo-marginata' and acacia also stay in the garage until January, when I take them upstairs to burst into odiferous bloom; a 10-year-old pot-bound clivia dazzles in March (three flower stalks this year!) as does a rampant *Jasminum polyanthum*; a too-tall, rosy-colored oleander, two pots of plumbago, a tub of confederate jasmine, and a passion-flower vine all add interest to the garden from April to frost.

Of course, there have been failures. It was silly to plant regale lilies amongst the hosta (I had a vision of counterbalanced horizontals and verticals) since the hosta quickly overpowered the bulbs. I thought it would be glamorous to try a fig tree — a bad idea. Its limbs took up too much space; the few fruit produced attracted too many



## PLANT LIST

(Arranged by approximate color and chronological order of bloom)

### Reds and Pinks

*Ilex* 'China Boy'™ and 'China Girl'™  
(berries)  
*Helleborus orientalis*  
*Camellia*  
*Tulipa* 'Apricot Beauty'  
Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*)  
Peonies (*Paeonia* 'Eleanor Roosevelt',  
'Pink Parfait')  
Mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*  
'Olympic Fire')  
Deciduous azalea 'Mount St. Helens'  
*Rosa* × *borboniana* 'La Reine Victoria',  
'Mme. Pierre Oger', 'Souvenir de la  
Malmaison', 'Mme. Isaac Pereire'  
*Rosa damascena* 'Celsiana', 'Rose de  
Rescht'  
*Rosa* 'Tiffany'  
*Rosa* 'Mary Rose'™, 'Belle Story'  
*Rosa* 'Margot Koster'  
*Lilium* 'Regale', 'Pink Perfection'  
*Astilbe chinensis taguetii* 'Superba'  
Oleander (in pots) (*Nerium*)  
*Phlox paniculata* 'Bright Eyes'  
Hollyhock (*Alcea rosea* 'Nigra')  
*Clematis* 'Ville de Lyon'  
Naked ladies or magic lily (*Lycoris  
squamigera*)  
*Aster novae-angliae* 'Alma Potschke'  
Sedum 'Autumn Joy'  
*Colchicum* ('Water Lily', *C. speciosum*)

### White

*Helleborus niger*  
*Helleborus foetidus*  
Winter heath (*Erica carnea*  
'Springwood White')  
Snowdrops (*Galanthus*)  
Japanese andromeda (*Pieris japonica*)  
Sweet woodruff (*Galium odoratum*)

*Viburnum* × *burkwoodii*  
Lily-of-the-valley (*Convallaria*)  
*Paeonia* 'Festiva Maxima'  
*Lilium* 'Regale'  
*Astilbe japonica* 'Deutschland'  
Confederate jasmine (in pots)  
(*Jasminum nitidum*)  
*Phlox paniculata* 'Mt. Fujiyama'  
*Hosta krossa* 'Regal', 'Royal Standard',  
*H. plantaginea* 'Grandiflora'  
Lilies (*Lilium formosanum*)  
Tuberoses  
*Clematis paniculata*  
Japanese anemone (*Anemone* × *hybrida*  
'Honorine Jobert', 'Whirlwind')  
*Elaeagnus*

### Blues

*Helleborus orientalis*  
Species crocus (*Crocus chrysanthus*  
'Princess Beatrix')  
*Scilla siberica*  
*Iris reticulata*  
Bluebells (*Mertensia*)  
*Scilla hispanica*  
Forget-me-not (*Myosotis*)  
*Camassia*  
*Iris sibirica* ('Persimmon', 'Caesar's  
Brother')  
Cranesbill geraniums (*Geranium*  
'Johnson's Blue')  
*Plumbago* (in pots)  
Passionflower (in pots) (*Passiflora*)  
*Aster* × *frikartii* 'Moench'  
*Caryopteris* × *clandonensis* 'Longwood  
Blue'  
Monkshood (*Aconitum carmichaelii*)

### Yellows and Golds

Aconites (*Eranthis* spp.)  
Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis* × *intermedia*  
'Arnold Promise')  
Species crocus (*Crocus chrysanthus*  
'Cream Beauty', 'Snowbunting')  
Narcissus 'Tete-tete', 'February Gold',  
'Salome', *Jonquilla* spp.  
*Rosa* 'Lawrence Johnston'  
Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*)  
Honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*  
'Graham Thomas')  
*Rosa* David Austin 'Graham  
Thomas'™  
*Rosa* 'Helen Traubel'  
Daylilies (*Hemerocallis* 'Happy  
Returns', 'Hyperion')  
Lilies (*Lilium* 'Copper King')  
*Ligularia dentata* 'Desdemona'  
*Sternbergia lutea*

### Grays

Lamb's ears (*Stachys byzantina*)  
*Lavandula angustifolia* 'Munstead'  
*Elaeagnus*  
*Caryopteris* × *clandonensis*

### In Pots for Winter Bloom Indoors

Christmas cactus (*Schlumbergera  
bridgesii*)  
*Osmanthus fragrans*  
Lemon tree (*Citrus meyeri*)  
Key lime tree (*Citrus aurantifolia*)  
Acacia  
*Daphne odora* 'Aureo-marginata'  
Paper whites (*Narcissus tazetta*)  
*Hyacinthus*  
*Clivia*  
*Camellia*

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wasps; mercifully it was finally killed off in the bitter-cold winter of 1994-95. Also, I had to modify my original policy of "No chemicals for the roses!" While it's workable with most of the bourbons, rugosas, and other toughs, it led to two near-disastrous encounters with blackspot, that bane of rose gardeners in humid Baltimore: during their first year, both 'La Reine Victoria' and my beloved 'Lawrence Johnston' were virtually stripped bare of leaves. So now I compromise and give them (and, I confess, the phlox) periodic dousings of Funginex.

But gardeners shouldn't dwell on mis-

takes. Instead, we must look optimistically on to an even more flower-filled future. Thus, this year's experiment. While I'd never dream of a garden without 'Celsiana' (purportedly Thomas Jefferson's favorite rose) its one month of bloom does make it spatially "expensive" in terms of square-footage devoted to a single large plant. So, to help it earn its keep, this year it's going to double as a trellis, and I've planted the vigorous *Clematis* 'Ville de Lyon' near its base. (The not-original idea being, of course, that when the rose's pink blossoms have gone, the clematis's carmine flowers will take over.) A large vine when purchased, the clematis's tendrils initially seemed unwilling to stop grasping onto

each other and take hold of the net I supplied them, a net intended to lead them up into 'Celsiana's branches. It took a while, but eventually the vine seemed to get the idea. Well, you may ask, did it work? Or did it end up counted among my many failures? Since mystery is one of gardening's charms, I will leave these questions unanswered and cordially suggest you try it yourselves.

Christopher Weeks's most recent book is *An Architectural History of Harford County, Maryland* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); his current project is a history of Harvey Ladew's topiary garden.



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A Baltimore rowhouse garden: In mid-May blue bearded and Siberian iris offer an interesting contrast to the exuberant pink roses — shown here the hybrid tea 'Tiffany', the Bourbon's 'Souvenir de la Malmaison' and 'Mme. Isaac Pereire'. See page 34.  
photo by Christopher Weeks

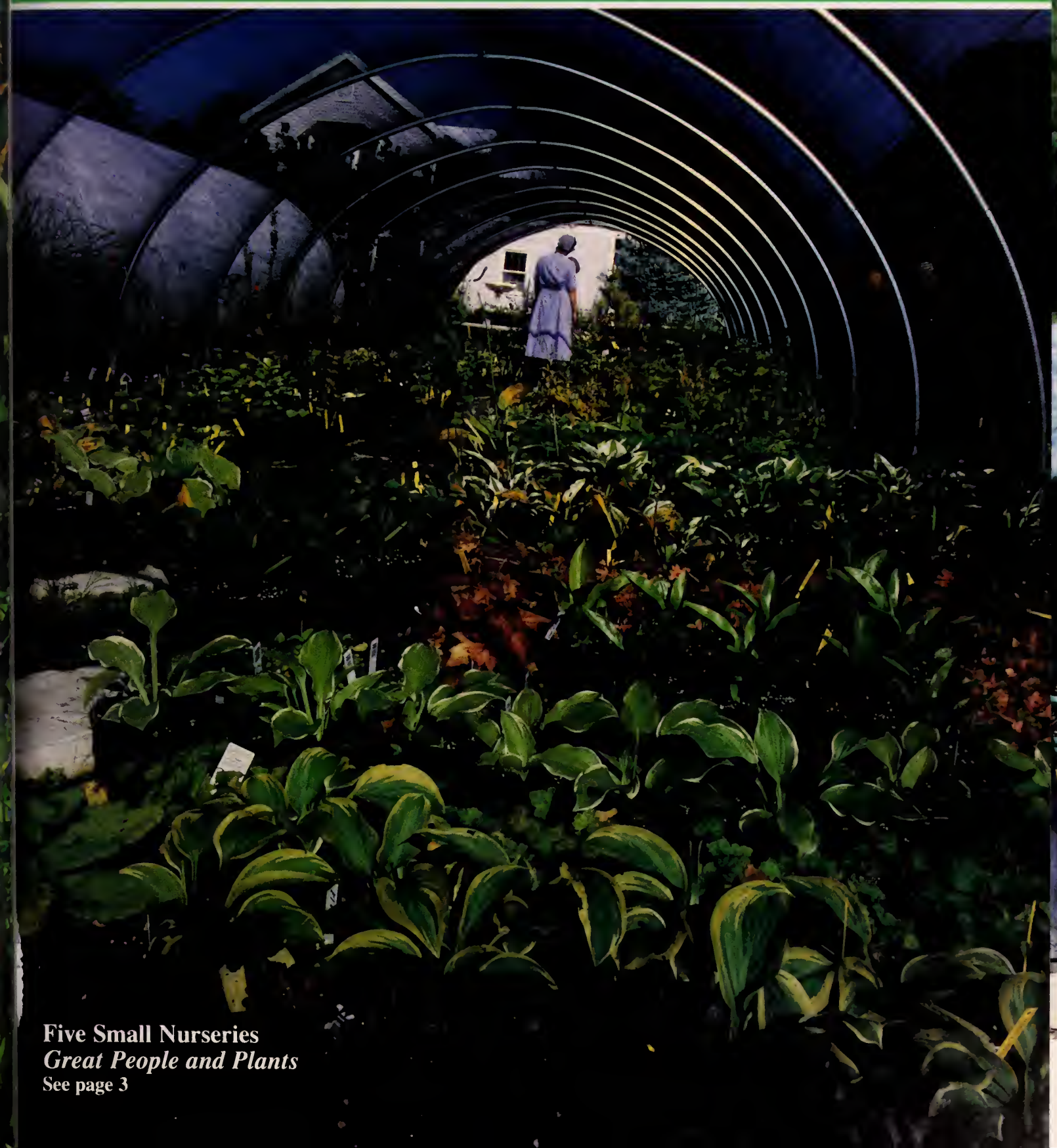




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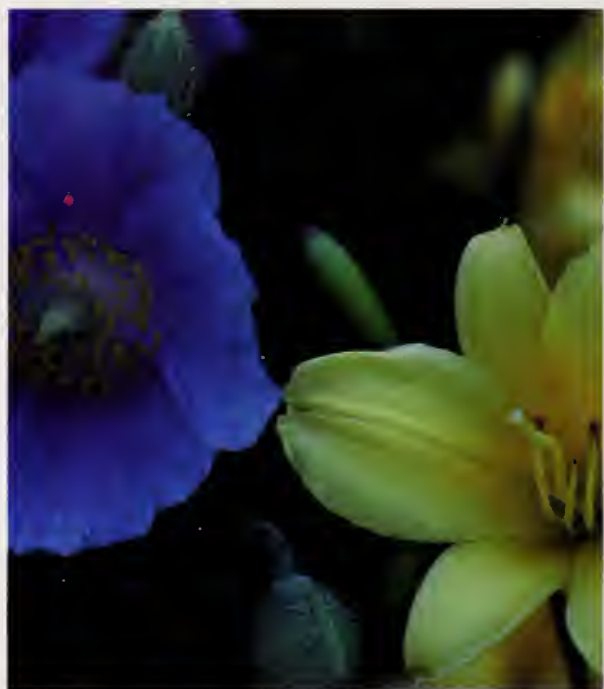


**Five Small Nurseries**  
*Great People and Plants*  
See page 3





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20.



27.

Front Cover: *Hosta* and *Heuchera* overwintering for spring sales fill Martin's Greenhouse in Lancaster County.  
photo by Mary Lou Wolfe



*Grow with us.*

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**CORRECTION:**

In the January issue of *Green Scene*, in "The Stone Trough" we listed John Shelley's Internet address incorrectly on page 33; a kind reader provided the correct address: <http://www.gdnctr.com>

Volume 25, Number 4 March/April 1997

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**Printer:** ALCOM Printing Group, Inc.

**The GREEN SCENE**, (USPS 955580), Volume 25, No. 4, published bimonthly, January, March, May, July, September, November, by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, a non-profit membership organization at 100 N. 20th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103. Subscription: \$12.95—Single Copy: \$2.75 (plus \$1.05 shipping). Second class postage paid at Philadelphia, PA 19103. • **POSTMASTER:** Send address change to THE GREEN SCENE, 100 N. 20th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103.

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# Five Small Nurseries

## *Great People and Plants*

 by Mary Lou Wolfe

As I turned off the Atlantic City Expressway onto a road leading through the New Jersey Pine Barrens one Saturday last fall, I wished I had persuaded my partner, Lindsay, to come along. I watched my mileage meter and looked for "Reliable Auto Body" on my left that indicated where I was to make my turn. There it was, and I spotted the white farm stand where I was to enter a long gravel driveway, watching for a faded sign that would read "Xanadu." Coleridge? Kubla Khan? Why would anyone name a nursery Xanadu? There, at last, was the sign, but the property didn't look much like a nursery and not a bit exotic.

photo by Mary Lou Wolfe



### *Xanadu*

I had met Xanadu's owner at the Hardy Plant Society, Mid-Atlantic Group Vendor sale at Tyler Arboretum in September and was actually drawn to Alan Kirkby's exhibit, not so much by his plants as by the sight of his two small children, 2½ and 4½, sitting in folding lawn chairs, each enthralled by a book while their father busily sold plants. Variegated plants are Kirkby's passion and many *Phlox paniculata* 'Nora Leigh' and 'Harlequin' were sold that sunny Saturday.

When I phoned the next week for an appointment Kirkby explained that his wife would be out of town but if I didn't mind seeing the nursery with kids as guides, I was welcome. As I got out of my car, a flock of guinea hens skittered off, patrolling the patchy grass. I commented on their reputation as great tick eaters but Kirkby's daughter, Charlotte, informed me in a lovely English accent that those guineas perched at night in a tree beside her bedroom and "made horrid noises." Later, when her father lifted a heat mat in his 100-ft. hoop house to show me how he overwintered cuttings, Charlotte spied and caught a tiny, harmless ring snake. For Charlotte and her little brother Nicholas, nature is always close by. Foxes steal baby chicks, voles eat plants in the hoop house and a headless guinea hen corpse hints that a Great Horned Owl is defining its territory.

What brought me out here next to the



At the edge of the Pine Barrens near Williamstown, N.J., Alan Kirkby has carved out space for Xanadu, the small nursery where he specializes in variegated plants like *Phlox paniculata* 'Nora Leigh'.



Pine Barrens was a suggestion from Jane Pepper, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society president, that I investigate some small nurseries like those she occasionally describes in her *Philadelphia Inquirer* gardening columns. In late spring I had seen the *Plant Source* booklet jointly published by Chanticleer, the Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College and the Hardy Plant Society. My copy was already full of yellow "stickies" marking nurseries I would like to visit, so I was ripe for this project. *Plant Source* covers nurseries in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lancaster, and Montgomery counties and is available by mail for \$5.00 from the Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College, 500 College Ave., Swarthmore, PA 19081. What really interested me were small, one-person operations that welcome visitors and retail sales, offer plants hard to find in larger garden centers, and that I could reach in less than a half-day's drive from home in Delaware County. Xanadu fit my profile perfectly.

As I toured with Kirkby and his enthusiastic guides, I learned that 90% of the plants he grows are variegated, a preference he acquired visiting gardens in his native England. He arrived in America after some years working in the oil industry in South America. He met and married Marian, who lived on a property bordering the Pine Barrens, whose former owner had a dog kennel named "Xanadu." So much for Kubla Khan. Kirkby began planting at Xanadu the variegated plants he could bring back from visits to England and others bought locally. He inadvertently got into the nursery business by answering a call for sources of *Phlox* 'Nora Leigh', pictured in an April '91 Ann Lovejoy article in *Horticulture* Magazine. A listing in its Plant Finder column led Kirkby into a



Alan Kirkby holds *Phlox paniculata* 'Harlequin', one of his favorites.

small mail-order business. Finding this project "too picky," he moved into selling to wholesalers and to acquaintances. Fort Washington Garden Mart (488 Bethlehem Pike, Ft. Washington, Pa.) will be carrying Kirkby's *Phlox* 'Nora Leigh' and 'Harlequin' this spring, should Williamstown, N.J., seem too distant.

Marian Kirkby works in the Post Office and Alan has taken the househusband role,

caring for Charlotte and Nicholas, mastering breadmaking, and propagating plants. Some new offerings at Xanadu this spring will include *Spiraea nipponica* 'Pink Ice' and *Cotoneaster lacteus* 'Golden Gate.'

Xanadu Nursery

2155 Winslow Rd.

Williamstown, NJ 08094

(609) 629-0878 for information or an appointment



### **Pendragon Perennials**

My next visit was to a Lehigh Valley nursery, Pendragon Perennials. I phoned owner Nancy Ondra in Emmaus, Pa., for a plant list, made an appointment, and talked my daughter, Margie Howe, into joining me. Ondra's plant list includes excellent directions to Emmaus and further, to the small, one-way Green St. where Pendragon is located. A 4-ft.-high planting of *Amaranthus* 'Hopi Red Dye' and assorted salvias formed a hedge beside Ondra's tidy white house set smack on the street's edge. It's

just a block from Emmaus's city center and sits on only one-fifth of an acre. I knew we had the right place when we read a sign near our parking space: "Gardening forever; housework, whenever."

Ondra grows all her own plants, both perennials and annuals, from seed obtained from botanical gardens, North American Rock Garden Society, the Hardy Plant Society, and the Seed Guild (an international seed exchange reached through the Internet). Her sale area is about the size of an average living room. Ondra's mother, Ethel, carpentered the attractive raised benches and triangular ground display units. A small, aging greenhouse, built as a solar

project by the former owner, is packed with plants in pots, come winter. Ondra now uses supplementary heat from an oil-type radiator to keep minimum temperatures above 40°F. This very small greenhouse can get too hot on a sunny winter day. The Pendragon solution: a tongue-in-cheek "Martha Stewart look" achieved with an old lace curtain shielding the glass.

Although she claims to be more an agronomist than a landscape designer, Ondra's property is imaginatively divided into sales, display, and private spaces. Margie and I marvelled at unusual annuals like *Datura metel* 'Heavy Metal' (see back cover), *Cobaea scandens*, and *Cardiosper-*





At top: Customer Margie Howe inspects some of the unusual perennials at Pendragon Perennials. Right: Nancy Ondra, proprietor of Pendragon Nursery, a vendor at the Hardy Plant Society, Mid-Atlantic Group Sale at Tyler Arboretum in September.

*mum halicacabum* (balloon vine). We purchased a number of hellebores introduced by David Culp, sales representative for New York for Sunny Border Nurseries in Kensington, Connecticut, and heard that more will be available this spring.

The presence of Morgan le Fay, listed in Pendragon's plant list as "Penultimate Dragon/Resident Rabbit," is intriguingly hinted at by small rabbit decorations. A shiny green rabbit-shaped gazing ball is set in a miniature meadow of *Ajuga reptans* 'Silver Beauty'. Meticulous fencing is engineered to contain the Penultimate one, a large, beautiful white female rabbit, "Morgan," named for King Arthur's half-sister. (I had to ask, having forgotten my Arthurian legends.) Ondra takes a light-hearted view of this whole nursery undertaking, but behind her humorous exterior is a knowledgeable, hardworking plantswoman with experience as a book editor for Rodale Press, now a freelance writer, and owner of this unique nursery.

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continued





### Martin's Greenhouses

Lots of gardeners keep a running "want list" of plants they've seen or read about and have found difficult to find. This next nursery might be a place to find some uncommon plants on your want list. In Lancaster County, five miles north of Honeybrook, Marian and Noah Martin run an exuberant nursery. They will mail you a 26-page computer listing with directions for reaching them and request that you send \$1.00 to help cover postage. You may write to:

Martin's Greenhouses  
1516 Division Highway  
Narvon, PA 17555  
or phone (717) 354-7546 for an appointment

My friend, expert plantswoman Dot Plyler, went with me to visit Martin's. From

Marian's phone directions, we decided that "purple" was the password. We were to spot her home on busy highway 322, because it is directly across from a very purple house. We would soon find out that Marian Martin delights in growing plants with purple foliage and/or flowers. For starters, a 20-ft. row of lavender borders the front of the two-acre property. We saw *Plectranthus ecklonii* (Marian calls it "knock your socks off purple"), *Salvia involucrata* 'Bethelli', *Strobilanthes dyerianus* (Persian shield) and *Alternanthera dentata* 'Ruby', all favorites of Martin's, all planted to achieve interesting contrasts.

Marian Martin grew up in a large family on a dairy farm in Lancaster County. She and her husband Noah have five children and belong to the Mennonite Weaverland Conference whose members drive, use electricity and have telephones. The Martins have a computer and Marian is an active member of the Hardy Plant Society. She attends Penn State University extension

programs on horticulture and found especially pertinent a recent one at Waterloo Gardens on "Overwintering Perennials."

The Martins have two heated hoop houses for propagating plants from cuttings and seeds and overwintering potted perennials. Marian is excited about an assortment of about 30 named coleus plants for spring sale, some of which can be grown in full sun. She is especially fond of using coleus as accents in container plantings.

Dot Plyler and I had to listen carefully to keep up with Martin's enthusiastic rapid-fire recitation of botanical names and her revelations of treasures in the garden. She led us under an arch covered by a kiwi vine (*Actinidia*) to a sheltered spot where *Eucomis* (pineapple lily from Africa described as a Zone 7 plant) has flourished outdoors here for seven years. We both enjoyed being with this fine gardener, purchased beautiful plants like *Brunnera macrophylla* 'Variegata' and knew we'd return in the spring.

photo by Mary Lou Wolfe



Marian Martin looks out over a stand of *Chelone lyonii* (pink turtle head) blooming in a moist field on the Lancaster County property where Marian and Noah built Martin's Greenhouses.





Assorted cuttings rooting in Martins' hoop house.



### *Steele's azalea nursery*

I heard about Steele's azalea nursery through a call to another nurseryman who did **not** want to be written about because he is too busy for the interruptions of casual visitors. He was most polite, and I am grateful that he pointed me toward Bill Steele. Although growing azaleas is a full-time hobby for Bill and Mich Steele, they limit their sale days to three intense spring weekends. When they moved 28 years ago to their home on a heavily wooded lot outside West Chester, Pa., they realized that trying to grow grass under all that shade would be a challenge. It wasn't long before they switched from grass to azaleas, purchasing their first plants from Al Fineman's Azalea Acres in Elam, Pa. The high shade of mature tulip poplars and ash on a gentle slope above the house was a perfect location that now accommodates 2,600 varieties.

photo by Bill Steele



Visitors to Steele's Nursery's Spring Azalea Sales in West Chester will see mature plantings like these.

Having struggled myself with deer that love azaleas and rhododendron, I had to

*continued*





Bill Steele holds a flat of potted one-year-old azalea cuttings that will winter in his north-facing cold frame.

photo by Mary Lou Wolfe

ask how his plants survive in this country location. Steele says a single strand of electrified wire, 30 to 36 inches off the ground, battery-operated and periodically baited with peanut butter at 4-ft. intervals, seems to control the intruders.

When Bill retired five years ago from a career as a math teacher, he had already been a member of the American Rhododendron Society for 12 years and had chaired its azalea study group for six. Producing rooted azalea cuttings to sell was a logical next step. Steele takes thousands of cuttings in June, moving them in September to his cool basement under fluorescent light where 21 flats are placed in polyethylene sacks transforming them into "sweat boxes." In November and December, Steele pots up the rooted cuttings into 3-in. pots, watering about every three weeks and keeping temperatures at 55 to 68°F. Some 3,000 to 4,000 liners (rooted cuttings in 3-in. pots and larger specimens) will be ready for sale by late April. To request their multi-page listing of almost 1,000 varieties of evergreen azaleas and *Lepidotes* (small-leaf rhododendron) contact the Steele's at:

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1055 E. Niel's Lane  
West Chester, PA 19382  
(610) 696-5042

The listing includes a map but does not give color or growth habit information. For those, like me, not on a first-name basis with the 2,000 varieties listed, Steele suggests consulting Fred Galle's 1985 book *Azaleas\** for particulars. Since a limited number of each variety is available, it's wise to order ahead to reserve the plants you want. All varieties offered are hardy in Zone 6.

I could tell from several meetings with Bill Steele and from reading the excellent care sheets he distributes with purchases, that he cares deeply about these plants and uses his teaching skills to help novice buyers succeed. At just \$2.00 per 3-in. pot, one can get a great start on a collection and invaluable information on soil preparation, planting, watering and mulching. Besides it's a treat to meet passionate gardeners like the Steeles and to see their beautiful, mature plantings in bloom. Sale days in 1997 will be: Saturdays and Sundays, April 26 & 27, May 3 & 4, and May 10 & 11.

\*Available on loan to members from the PHS Library





### Grayson Gardens

Leslie Grayson credits a lot of people for her plunge into the nursery business in Royersford, Montgomery County, Pa. Plantsman Ken Druse in his most recent book, *The Collector's Garden* (Clarkson Potter, N.Y., 1996)\*, says "Avid collectors dream of having a successful specialty nursery growing favorite plants and shipping them to like-minded gardeners." Grayson avidly collects hardy geraniums and peonies. Mothering three sons under six years old, supervising landscape installations at a local nursery, and managing an old house on two acres of good land would seem enough to keep anyone busy. Friends like plantsman David Culp kept encouraging her. Culp said "I will do anything to help you in your business. I want to be able to buy plants from you."

Grayson started her business, Grayson Gardens, three years ago. Her mother, a family therapist, comes on Fridays to help pot and enter plants on the computer. Her husband Douglas helps with heavy work and knows what to give a gardening wife for her birthday — a hoop house! Even Grayson's father who is not an avid gardener and whose business takes him to England frequently, has been pressed into becoming a plant importer. Grayson has twice given him her hardy geranium wish list. He picks up, from growers like Elizabeth Strangman in Washfield, Kent, the 12 plants one is allowed to bring into the U.S. He washes soil off roots in 4-star hotels, labels plants in baggies and, on arrival in Connecticut, Fed-Exes them to his daughter in Royersford.

Grayson says about her decision to go into the nursery business, "People do it because they love it, not to make a fortune." She started with peonies from a premier peony grower, Klehm's Nursery in Champaign, Ill. She sells plants labelled with Klehm tags, and keeps the Klehm catalog handy for visitors. It's a marvel of illustrations and descriptions but seeing the plants growing at Grayson's, touching foliage, and smelling fragrant blossoms, makes a difference. Half of Grayson's peonies are in the ground, half in containers ready to sell at any time during the growing season and available for shipping in October. In addition, this spring, Grayson will also be offering some spectacular tree peonies in five and seven-gallon containers from Peony Garden Imports in Berkeley, California.

*continued*



photo by Mary Lou Wolfe

Leslie Grayson beams behind a display table filled with plants she grows at the Hardy Plant Society, Mid-Atlantic Group's Vendor Sale at Tyler Arboretum in September. These include her specialty, hardy geraniums.





10

Leslie Grayson checks *Aster laevis* 'Blue Bird', a Mt. Cuba for the Study of Piedmont Flora introduction. Its clumps grow to 4 ft. near flowers an inch across and requires little staking. It's resistant to mildew.

Hardy geraniums are Grayson's other passion. She supplies a number of wholesalers who find they just can't keep up with the demand for these versatile plants. Grayson's plant catalog lists 10 varieties of geraniums but she grows "too many to list, all great additions to the garden." On my fall visit I especially admired *Geranium wlassovianum* whose dark, velvety leaves were turning orangey red.

Grayson Gardens are generally open Friday afternoons and Saturdays in April, May, and June. Grayson suggests that visitors call for an appointment so she "can corral the dogs." Believe me, they're big ones. I was happy to have their mistress escort me into their territory.

Grayson Gardens  
1044 Second Ave.  
Royersford, PA 19468

For plant catalog phone (610) 948-3661  
E-mail GRAY1044@aol.com

I found as I visited these "one-person" nurseries, that each succeeded with help from family, from the horticultural organizations they participated in (Hardy Plant Society, American Rhododendron Society) and from their peers who supported and cheered them on. Names like Joanne Walkovic's of the Hardy Plant Society, Mid-Atlantic Group, David Culp's and Stephanie Cohen's, a dedicated herbaceous plants educator at Temple University and at large, kept reappearing as having been of great help to these nursery folk. Leslie Grayson's father washed soil off geraniums in 4-star hotels, Nancy Ondra's mother repaired an aging greenhouse, Mich Steele donated her basement for use as an azalea intensive care ward, Noah Martin takes

time from his mechanic's job to erect hoop houses, and Marian Kirkby brings in the steady paycheck that allows Alan to nurture children and plants.

The yellow "stickies" and notes in my Plant Source pamphlet remind me that there are hundreds of nurseries to be visited in this rich horticultural area, the Delaware Valley. I recommend that you ferret out your favorites, request plant lists, call for appointments, bring cash or checks, and, if you're lucky, another zealous plant nut for company.

Mary Lou Wolfe lives and gardens in Delaware County and enjoys the excuse to visit nurseries to find plants for an expanding rock garden.



# The Horticrostic Winners



by Jean Byrne

**W**e're elated with the response to the Horticrostics puzzle that appeared in the January issue. As we go to press we've had 137 responses. The first one arrived on the first possible day after *Green Scene* was mailed, Monday, January 6 at 10 of 8 in the morning; by 3 o'clock that day we had our 10 winners. And forms kept pouring in by fax, hand delivery and postal service.

To all of you who labored over the devilish puzzle, our thanks for your diligence. Erin Fournier, Publications assistant, who scrupulously coded the arrivals, told us there were anxious phone calls monitoring the number of entries; one young woman, hearing we had seven on the first day, ran over to our office, hair a-flying, to get in before the 10th one arrived. Another woman called to say her family worked on the puzzle together, using her extensive plant library, and her daughter would not go to school the morning of the 6th until her mother assured her she'd walk their response into PHS. Yes, they were among the winners. It's a measure of our members that they tackled the puzzle with the patience and acuity of gardeners and seasoned competitors in the Flower Show and Harvest Show.

**Here are the winners.** The first four each received a pair of Flower Show tickets: **Marilyn Taylor, Karen E. Maull, Marlin Nelson and Joan Meschter.** **Mara Witynski** won a free ad in *Green Scene*; **Dot Plyler** won a free membership to the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society; **Pam McCracken** won a free subscription to *Green Scene*; **Alice Doering** won a copy of *Gardening with Water* by James van Sweden; **Lola Tomlinson** won a copy of *The Flower Garden, A Practical Guide to Planning and Planting*/The Wayside Garden Collection by Helen Dillon, and **Mandy Benjamin** won a free season's pass to Chanticleer in Wayne, Pennsylvania.

**The winning quote** around which Richard Bitner constructed the Horticrostic follows:

*The winter garden is a showcase for texture and architecture in the landscape. The bare bones of shrubs and trees become bold and bright in the wintry sun. Flowers are rare, although precocious spring bulbs often force their way out of the cold earth to surprise us with their grace and delicacy.*

*We do not often think of herbaceous plants for winter — it is a time of quiescence; herbs will have their show when the world wakes. However, there*

*are herbaceous perennials that are essential for the winter garden. Perhaps the finest are the hellebores . . .*

From "Hellebores: The Aristocrats of Winter-flowering Plants" by Christopher Woods which appeared in *The Winter Garden*, a 1991 issue of *Plants & Gardens* published by the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. Christopher Woods is executive director of Chanticleer in Wayne, Pa.

Our thanks to Richard L. Bitner who patiently designed the puzzle; to Chris Woods and to Judy Zuk, president of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden who gave us

permission to use the quote; and to all you enthusiastic players who plunged right in to solve the puzzle. Maybe, just maybe, we'll do this again sometime.

## For more information

Richard L. Bitner, the Horticrostic creator, recommends *Clematis and the Ranunculaceae* by Deborah Kellaway, Trafalgar Square, Vermont, 1994. Available to members through the PHS Library. Reviewed in Nov. 1996 *Green Scene*.



photo by Richard L. Bitner

Phoebe checks her favorite Ranunculaceae, *Helleborus orientalis*, the subject of the Horticrostic.



# Establishing a Rock Garden in an 18th Century Setting



by Elizabeth Knorr

photos by Elizabeth Knorr



In 1982, after 12 years, the Knorrs' 18th-century garden fits with their house, and they are ready to take the next step — a rock garden.

Any idea that someday we might want to spread large rocks and tons of scree over the uppermost slope of our newly acquired property certainly never occurred to us when we were planning our 18th century garden. Rather we were thinking of Williamsburg when we began planting our two and a half acres on a bare hillside in Gladwyne in April 1970. After countless trips to Virginia's first capital for expert consultations on constructing an "authentic" 18th century house with 20th century materials, we were ready to tackle the garden.

Landscape designer Frederick W.G. Peck was responsible for the design. With his

superb sense of scale and proportion, he oriented both house and out-buildings to our sloping site. He planned two terraces. One facing south had an elegant sitting wall of old brick faced with flagstone that matched the shallow steps descending to a fountain set in a lead pool in the center of eight parterre beds. A larger terrace on the east side adjacent to the greenhouse and herb garden was to be surrounded by brick-edged beds curving toward the lath house.

On the shallow slope above the swimming pool and between the two terraces, his plan provided a spacious setting for our beloved collection of dwarf conifers, which was to be the horticultural focal point of the

garden. On the north side above the brick-walled courtyard, Peck indicated an "orchard" of dwarf fruit trees that screened a fairly deep but invisible grassy swale designed to drain heavy rains toward the driveway. He then left us to get on with the digging.

We began by planting hundreds of small boxwoods (we bought a retiring New Jersey nurseryman's entire stock), uncounted flats of *Vinca minor* 'Bowles Variety' and special hollies from our former garden: *Ilex aquifolium*, *I. pernyi*, and an *I. pedunculosa* (grown from a cutting and now large enough to be espaliered on the garage wall). Finally, as the temperature climbed





"Way In" enters the garden beneath the driveway maples. Signs became necessary to indicate one-way traffic for large groups once the rock garden was established.

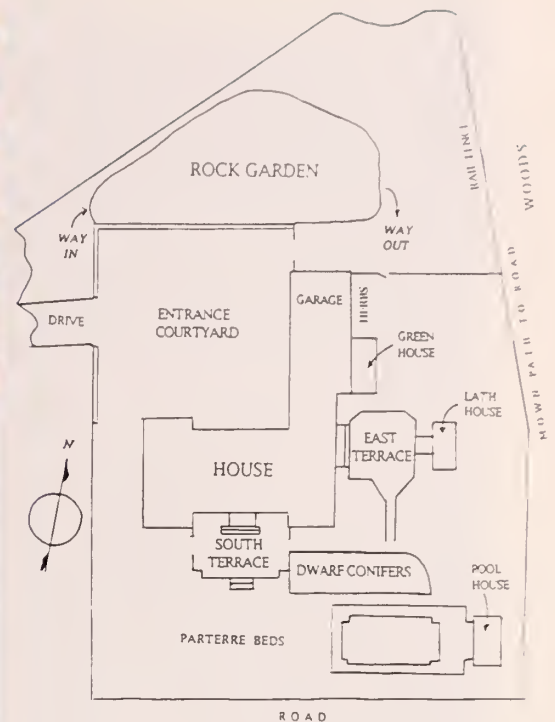
in early June, we faced the exciting challenge of moving the dwarf conifers while highlighting the placement of individual plants so, we hoped, that their myriad shapes and colors would blend into a unified design.

This, then, was the beginning of our garden, and during its early years our main thrust was toward enhancing its design by adding plants not only appropriate to its period but plants that could thrive on our windy stony hillside. Among our successes were *Franklinia alatamaha*, *Stewartia pseudocamellia*, *Magnolia virginiana*, *M. stellata*, *Cedrus libani* as well as *C. atlantica* (green and blue) and a number of hollies.

We were even successful in coaxing a *Magnolia grandiflora* into showing three small white blooms among its glossy leaves.

During this time the dwarfs were thriving on their sunny well-drained slope. To preserve the scale within their bed we began to move the largest specimens to more solitary locations, replacing them with choice small hybrids including a few sun-loving broad-leaved varieties, i.e. *Andromeda folifolia* 'Grandiflora', *Paxistima canbyi*, *Iberis sempervirens* 'Pygmaea'.

Concerned with the increasing need to spread them out we revisited some of the well-known collections of dwarf conifers and discovered that the Gotelli Group at



the National Arboretum had spilled into several new beds and now occupied a large area across the road. At Longwood Gardens many of their "little trees" had been moved to become focal points within their rock garden. It seemed a good time to enroll in a short course there to discover more about the uses of dwarfs. The next step was Marnie Flook's course "An Introduction to Rock Garden Plants," and gradually we became convinced that we might create a special garden to feature our growing dwarfs. We joined The American Rock Garden Society and began to study the experts.

### Questions about rock gardens

As we seriously considered possible areas on our property for establishing a rock garden some practical questions needed answers. Could we find appropriate large rocks locally and, if we did, could we bring them in without greatly disturbing the established area? Most important, would a rock garden "fit in" with the clipped formality of the parterre beds and topiaries that we had worked so hard to establish? Clearly we needed professional advice.

Although in the fall of 1984 he was working at the New York Botanic Garden, Karl Grieshaber agreed to a Saturday visit to evaluate our situation. His recommendation was encouraging. Best of all, he agreed to draw the plan and supervise the construction in early 1985 if, in the meantime, we could locate the necessary materials and labor for the weekends when he would be free.

The logistics of bringing large boulders as well as tons of sand and scree to the





**Above and at right:** Two views show the mature rock garden in 1995. Both feature the flourishing dwarf conifers that inspired the rock garden.

planting site above the courtyard involved removing several sections of rail fence between our property and the adjacent woods where we had already established a 20-ft.-wide mown path to the road. After this, all would depend on finding and delivering the materials while frost sufficiently hardened the ground to bear the weight of heavy truck loads. After an intensive search, we finally located not only a respectable collection of large brown boulders but all the other needed supplies at the Rock Hill Quarry just five miles from our house.

By early March our designer inspected our selections and approved our final arrangements. The weather then became our greatest concern. By working early in the morning before the ground began to thaw,

by using a smaller truck (which meant more trips for the driver), a total of 19 rocks, each weighing no less than one and one-half tons, was delivered.

The first Saturday in April the operator of the front-end loader began the digging, grading and placing of rocks with Grieshaber in command. The adjacent woods provided a dumping place for the stony hillside soil as well as a source of rich dark loam to take its place. With the plan before us we watched them work, creating planting holes for our larger trees, nudging the rocks into position, some exposed, others partly buried. At the end of the first day the grading was finished and all rocks were in place. The second Saturday the largest of our trees, which we had been digging and burlapping during the week, were moved

and planted with the front-end loader swinging them into place, their planting holes then filled with compost and peat. On the next two Saturdays they removed all remaining sod and spread a layer of builder's sand to a depth of three and one-half inches over the entire planting area. Between weekends we "rearranged" the spaces in our older garden left by the conifers we had moved. The weather remained unusually dry and all transplants needed to be watched and most watered daily.

With so much to do April 28th came all too soon. That day saw the culmination of our efforts. Promptly at 8:30 a.m. the van we had rented to bring the small rock garden plants from Environmental Nurseries arrived driven by Grieshaber. He





dry weather, plant loss has been minimal. Nor has extra watering been a problem because we applied heavy oak bark mulch around the evergreens, and the scree of one-inch stones over three inches of sand covers the rest of the garden. The swale on our hillside is still functional. Deepened and reinforced with large boulders on both sides and now provided at the bottom with irregularly placed stepping stones firmly embedded in scree, its sloping sides provide relatively easy maintenance and accessible viewing of individual plants.

### *Planning for garden traffic*

As the rock garden became more established, and the number of visitors increased, one-way traffic became essential, especially for large groups. Eventually we added two small signs. "Way In," a series of 14 flagstone steps flanked by *Vinca* and *Juniperus horizontalis* set in heavy oak bark mulch, enters the garden beneath the driveway maples, a gentle slope where shade-loving plants can thrive. "Way Out," at the far end of the rock garden, exits from the top of the slope down shallow railroad-tie steps to a gate into our original garden. On the banks beside the steps we have planted some of our most spectacular large dwarfs, a weeping hemlock and two matching muhgo pines to screen the vegetable garden beyond and form a transition to the relatively smaller specimens planted among the rocks above.

Just inside the gate screened by a weeping

spruce, three south-facing cold frames, and two curved beds protected by the lath house, provide the needed holding space for tiny new alpiners and miniature dwarf conifers. Here, beside the herb garden our greenhouse shelters the propagation cases of boxwoods, ground covers and some of the "easier" small evergreens. Lately after several years of "on-site" experience we were able to evaluate the performance of our rock garden plants, to experiment with new varieties, and to attempt their propagation as well.

We have a growing list of appropriate plants that have flourished in both gardens; herbs, especially lavenders and thymes, the dwarf form of *Iberis*, and most of the smaller bulbs. Heading this list, of course, are the dwarf conifers. Equally beautiful among our hillside rocks and within the balanced planting around the brick terraces, they are the horticultural common denominator of both areas, for they have justified our main incentive to build a rock garden in an 18th-century setting.

•

Elizabeth Knorr studied horticulture with Mrs. Barnes at the Barnes Foundation Arboretum and at Longwood Gardens. The Knorrs, avid collectors of dwarf conifers, open their garden frequently and have hosted groups from the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania, Scott Arboretum, North American Rock Garden Society, and the Dwarf Conifer Society.

would supervise our efforts along with four other experienced helpers. With the planting plan taped to the courtyard wall, the unloading, checking, placing, planting and labeling began. Two strong young men removed to the woods piles of sub-soil left by the bulldozer and returned with wheelbarrows loaded with a mixture of compost and peat. As soon as one variety was planted, watered and labeled, the planter moved on. At 2:30 p.m. the job was finished. Two days later we had two inches of rain.

Since that day we've added a great many plants to the rock garden including a growing assortment of miniature bulbs. Although the garden faces due south on a windy hillside and although its first few years were marked by some unusually hot



# Plant Societies' Special Meetings and Sales 1997

 *by Erin Fournier*



## CYLBURN ARBORETUM ASSOCIATION, INC.

**Cylburn Market Day**  
Sat., May 10, 8am-2pm  
Cylburn Arboretum  
4915 Greenspring Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21209

**Exotic and Native Plant Sale**  
Sept. 6, 8am-2pm  
Cylburn Arboretum  
4915 Greenspring Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21209

**Contact:**  
Cylburn Arboretum  
4915 Greenspring Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21209  
410-367-2217  
call Tues. or Thurs. 10am-3pm

## FRELINGHUYSEN ARBORETUM 9th Annual Harvest Show & Plant Sale

Fri., Sept. 12, 12:30-8pm  
Sat. & Sun., Sept. 13-14, 11am-5pm  
Haggerty Education Center  
Frelinghuysen Arboretum  
53 East Hanover Avenue  
Morris Township, NJ 07960  
Free Admission  
*Plant sale by NJ Committee-Garden Club of America*

**Contact:**  
Nancy Strong  
Frelinghuysen Arboretum  
53 E. Hanover Avenue  
Morris Township, NJ 07960  
201-326-7600

## FRIENDS OF THE FRELINGHUYSEN ARBORETUM Distinctive Annual Plant Sale

Sat., May 3, 10am-3pm  
Sun., May 4, 10am-3pm  
Frelinghuysen Arboretum  
53 E. Hanover Avenue  
Morris Township, NJ 07960

**Contact:**  
Helen Mageau or Nancy Strong  
Frelinghuysen Arboretum  
53 E. Hanover Avenue  
Morris Township, NJ 07960  
201-326-7600

## FRIENDS OF THE U.S. NATIONAL ARBORETUM Celebrate Spring!

**Garden Fair & Plant Auction**  
Sat., April 19, 9am-5pm  
Free Admission

U.S. National Arboretum  
New York Avenue Entrance  
Washington, D.C.  
202-544-8733  
fax: 202-544-5398

## Great Arboretum Cookout 1997 Louisiana "Fais Do-Do"

Thurs., June 12, 6-9pm  
Open to Public (please  
make reservation)

U.S. National Arboretum  
New York Avenue  
Entrance  
Washington, D.C.  
202-544-8733  
fax: 202-544-5398

## Rare Plant Auction & Autumn Reception

Fri., Oct. 3, 6-10pm  
Open to Public (please  
make reservation)  
Plant Science Center  
U.S. National Arboretum  
New York Avenue Entrance  
Washington, D.C.  
202-544-8733  
fax: 202-544-5398

## SCOTT ARBORETUM Biennial Plant Sale

Fri., September 19, 5-7pm  
Sat., September 20, 9am-2pm  
Scott Arboretum  
500 College Ave.  
Swarthmore, PA 19081

**Contact:**  
Scott Arboretum  
500 College Ave.  
Swarthmore, PA 19081  
610-328-8025

## AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC. National African Violet Convention & Show

June 1-8, 1997  
Tradewinds Resort Hotel  
Saint Petersburg, Florida  
Registration fee  
Free admission to public on June 6, 1997  
Hundreds of plants on exhibit and in competition  
For Individual or Commercial

**Contact:**  
Anne Tinari  
2325 Valley Road  
Huntingdon Valley, PA  
19006  
215-947-0144

## AFRICAN VIOLET CLUB OF MORRIS COUNTY

**African Violet Show, Educational Display & Plant Sale**  
Sat., April 12, 12:30-5pm  
Sun., April 13, 1-4pm  
Haggerty Education Center-Frelinghuysen Arboretum  
53 E. Hanover Avenue  
Morristown, NJ 07960  
Free Admission

**Contact:**  
Nancy Strong  
Frelinghuysen Arboretum  
53 E. Hanover Avenue  
Morristown, NJ 07960  
201-326-7600

## AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA

**Monthly Meeting**  
1st Thursday of each month  
Ridge Avenue  
United Methodist Church  
Ridge & Shawmont  
Roxborough, PA

**Plant Sale**  
Sat., Nov. 8, 1-5pm  
Sun., Nov. 9, 12-4pm  
Location TBA

**Contact:**  
Margaret Cass  
920 Andorra Rd.  
Lafayette Hill, PA 19444  
215-836-5467

## AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF SPRINGFIELD

**Annual Show & Plant Sale**  
April 25-27, 12-mall closing  
Springfield Mall  
Baltimore Pike & Sproul  
Road  
Springfield, PA  
Open to Public Sat. & Sun.  
(set-up Friday)

**Meeting**  
1st Monday of every  
month  
7:30-10pm  
Township Bldg.  
50 Powell Road  
Springfield, PA

**Contact:**  
Judi Criswell  
1105 E. Darby Rd.  
Havertown, PA 19083  
610-449-9041

## TRI-STATE AFRICAN VIOLET COUNCIL SHOW 36th Annual Tristate African Violet Council Show

Sat., Nov. 1, 1:30-5pm  
Sun., Nov. 2, 10am-4pm  
Haggerty Education Center, Frelinghuysen  
Arboretum  
53 E. Hanover Avenue  
Morris Township, NJ 07960  
Free Admission

**Contact:**  
Nancy Strong  
Frelinghuysen Arboretum  
53 E. Hanover Avenue  
Morris Township, NJ 07960  
201-316-7600

## GREAT SWAMP BONSAI SOCIETY Great Swamp Bonsai Society Annual Display Show

Sat., June 7, 10-4pm  
Haggerty Education Center, Frelinghuysen  
Arboretum  
53 E. Hanover Ave.  
Morristown, NJ 07960  
Free Admission

**Contact:**  
Nancy Strong  
Frelinghuysen Arboretum  
53 E. Hanover Avenue  
Morris Township, NJ 07960  
201-326-7600

## UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE BOTANIC GARDENS Plant Sale

Fri., April 18 (Pre-sale pick-up), 2pm-8pm  
Sat., April 19, 10am-4pm  
Fischer Greenhouse, Ag. Campus  
University of Delaware  
Newark, DE 19717

**Contact:**  
John Frett  
Dept. of Plant & Soil  
Sciences  
Univ. of Delaware  
Newark, DE 19717  
302-831-2531

## PHILADELPHIA BOTANICAL SOCIETY

**Meeting:**  
Fourth Thursday—September-May, 8pm  
Third Thursday—November & December, 8pm  
Academy of Natural Sciences  
19th & Parkway  
Phila., PA 19103-1195

**Contact:**  
Elizabeth B. Farley  
Academy of Natural  
Sciences  
1900 Benjamin Franklin  
Pkwy.  
Phila., PA 19103-1195  
610-667-0625



# PHILADELPHIA CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY

**Plant Sale**  
 April 19, 10am-7pm  
 April 20, 10am-5:30pm  
 Peddler's Village  
 (Flower & Garden Festival)  
 Rt. 202 & 263  
 Lahaska, PA 18931  
 Free Admission

**Meeting**  
 2nd Sunday of each  
 month, 1pm  
 (except May)  
 May 4, 1pm  
 Horticulture Center  
 W. Fairmount Park  
 Phila., PA  
**June Plant Sale (TBA)**

**Contact:**  
 Rita B. Hohnowski  
 517 Cecelia Drive  
 Blackwood, NJ 08012-3808  
 609-227-0599

# DELAWARE CENTER FOR HORTICULTURE

**Wilmington Garden Tour**  
 June 28, 10am-4pm  
 Purchase tickets at  
 Delaware Center for  
 Horticulture  
 Price TBA

**Rare Plant Auction**  
 April 25, 6:30-10:30pm  
 Longwood Gardens  
 Conservatory  
 Kennett Square, PA  
 19348  
 Tickets: \$100, \$175,  
 \$250

**Contact:**  
 Melinda Zochrer  
 1810 N. Dupont St.  
 Wilmington, DE 19806  
 302-658-6262

# DELAWARE VALLEY CHRYSANTHEMUM SOCIETY

**Chrysanthemum Show**  
 Oct. 11, 1-5pm  
 Oct. 12, 10am-5pm  
 Longwood Gardens  
 Kennett Square, PA  
 Longwood Admission Cost

**Plant Sale**  
 May 17, 9am-4pm  
 Tyler Arboretum  
 515 Painter Rd.  
 Media, PA 19063

**Contact:**  
 Ralph B. Parks  
 821 Meredith Drive  
 Media, PA 19063  
 610-566-5644

# NEW JERSEY STATE CHRYSANTHEMUM SOCIETY

**44th Annual NJ State Chrysanthemum Show**  
 Sat., Oct. 11, 2-6pm  
 Sun., Oct. 12, 1-5pm  
 Haggerty Education Center—Frelinghuysen Arboretum  
 53 E. Hanover Avenue  
 Morris Township, NJ 07960  
 Free Admission

**Contact:**  
 Nancy Strong  
 Frelinghuysen Arboretum  
 53 E. Hanover Ave.  
 Morris Township, NJ 07960  
 201-326-7600

# AMERICAN CONIFER SOCIETY

**National Meeting for American Conifer Society**  
 Aug. 1 & 2  
 Best Western Midway  
 Elk Grove Village, IL (Chicago area)  
 Fee TBA

**Contact:**  
 Frank Goodhart  
 27 Oak Knoll Rd.  
 Mendham, NJ 07945  
 908-879-4788

# DELAWARE VALLEY DAFFODIL SOCIETY

**Daffodil Show at Longwood Gardens**  
 April 19, 9am-5pm  
 April 20, 9am-5pm  
 Longwood Gardens  
 Kennett Square, PA  
 Longwood Admission Cost

**Plant Sale**  
 Sat., Sept. 27, 10-2pm  
 Jenkins Arboretum  
 Devon, PA

**Contact:**  
 Elise Payne  
 610-688-4377

# MARYLAND DAFFODIL SOCIETY

**Maryland Daffodil Show**  
 Wed., April 23, 12-8pm  
 Thur., April 24, 9am-2pm  
 (Entries Tues. eve. & Wed.  
 until 9am)  
 Church of the Redeemer  
 5603 N. Charles St.  
 Baltimore, MD 21210

**Annual Fall Mtg.**  
 October  
 Date & Time TBA  
 Cylburn Arboretum  
 4915 Greenspring Ave  
 Baltimore, MD 21209

**Contact:**  
 Cindy Crawley  
 910 Rolandvue Rd.  
 Ruxton, MD 21204  
 410-321-4493  
 fax: 410-337-7034

# NEW JERSEY DAFFODIL SOCIETY

**22nd Annual New Jersey Daffodil Show**  
 April 18, 1-4pm  
 April 19, 10am-4pm  
 Haggerty Education Bldg., Frelinghuysen Arboretum  
 53 E. Hanover Ave.  
 Morristown, NJ 07960  
 202-326-7600

**Contact:**  
 Shirley Cameron  
 231 Davison Place  
 Englewood, NJ 07631  
 201-569-9257  
 Mrs. Kendall Nottingham  
 201-763-8531

# GREATER PHILADELPHIA DAHLIA SOCIETY

**Dahlia Show**  
 Sat., Sept. 20, 1-6pm  
 Sun., Sept. 21, 10am-6pm  
 Longwood Gardens  
 US Rte. 1  
 Kennett Square, PA 19348  
 Longwood Admission Price

**Tuber & Plant Sale**  
 May 15, 7:30pm  
 Zachary's Restaurant in  
 the Media Inn  
 Rte. 252 & Baltimore Pk.  
 Media, Pa 19063

**Contact:**  
 Pauline Fanady  
 201 W. Evergreen Ave.  
 Apt. 211  
 Philadelphia, PA 19118  
 215-247-6577

# DELAWARE VALLEY DAYLILY SOCIETY

**Daylily Flower Show**  
 Sat., July 12, 1-5pm  
 Paoli Presbyterian Church  
 Paoli, PA

**Plant Sale & Auction**  
 Aug. 23, 9am Sale  
 Aug. 23, 1pm Auction  
 Church of the Good  
 Samaritan  
 Paoli Pke & Rte. 30  
 Paoli, PA  
**Contact: Cathy  
 Tomlinson  
 610-458-0177**

**Contact:**  
 Penny Barker  
 1200 Limerlost Lane  
 Gladwyne, PA 19035  
 610-642-3941

# THE GARDEN CLUB OF NEW JERSEY Judges Council of the Garden Club of NJ Flower Show

Fri., May 2, 1-5pm  
 Sat., May 3, 10am-4pm  
 Haggerty Education Center, Frelinghuysen  
 Arboretum  
 53 E. Hanover Ave.  
 Morris Township, NJ 07960  
 Free Admission, Donations Accepted

**Contact:**  
 Mrs. Edward Bryan  
 908-741-4162

# FRELINGHUYSEN ARBORETUM GESNERIAD SOCIETY

**18th Annual Frelinghuysen Arboretum Gesneriad Society Show & Sale**  
 Sun., Oct. 5, 11am-4pm  
 Haggerty Education Center—Frelinghuysen  
 Arboretum  
 53 E. Hanover Ave.  
 Morristown, NJ 07962-1295  
 Free Admission

**Contact:**  
 Nancy Strong  
 Frelinghuysen Arboretum  
 PO Box 1295  
 Morristown, NJ 07962  
 201-326-7600

# AMERICAN GLOXINIA & GESNERIAD SOCIETY, LIBERTY BELL CHAPTER

**Propagation Workshops & Speakers**  
 May & November, the 3rd  
 Tuesday, 7:30pm  
 Location TBA

**Monthly Meetings**  
 3rd Tuesday monthly (except  
 summer), 7:30pm  
 Member's homes, TBA

**Spring & Fall Plant Sale**  
 TBA, 7:30pm  
 Location TBA

**Contact:**  
 Laura Shannon  
 8845 Norwood Ave.  
 Chestnut Hill, PA 19118  
 215-247-8527

# HARDY PLANT SOCIETY, MID-ATLANTIC GROUP

**Spring Plant Sale**  
 May 31, Time TBA  
 Tyler Arboretum  
 515 Painter Road  
 Media, Pa 19063-4424  
 \$15.00 Membership

**Contact:**  
 Pat Horowitz  
 801 Concord Road  
 Glen Mills, PA 19342  
 610-558-2857



Plant Sale at Historic Bartram's Garden at 54th and Lindbergh Boulevard in Philadelphia.



**HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA, DELAWARE VALLEY UNIT****Maying at the Mill, A Medieval Country Fair & Plant Sale**

May 17, 10am-4pm  
Prallsville Mill, Rte. 29  
Stockton, NJ

**Contact:**

Joan Noveske  
6278 Groveland Road  
Pipersville, PA 18947  
215-297-5348

**Monthly Meeting**

**Day Meetings:** 3rd Wednesday, 10am

**Eve Meetings:** 2nd Tuesday, 7pm  
Call for location

**HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA, NORTHERN NEW JERSEY UNIT****Plant Sale**

May 10, 10am-2pm  
Delbarton School  
Mendham Rd.  
Morristown, NJ 07960

**Monthly Meeting**

2nd Thursday, Feb.-Nov.  
Location TBA

**Contact:**

Mrs. Bluntschli  
281 White Oak Ridge Rd.  
Short Hills, NJ 07078  
201-379-1343

**PENNSYLVANIA HEARTLAND HERB SOCIETY****Herbal Delight Symposium "Herbal Odyssey"**

June 23, All Day  
June 24, All Day  
Albright College  
Reading, PA  
Fee TBA

**Contact:**

Darlene Henning  
173 Deysher Rd.  
Fleetwood, PA 19522  
610-987-6184

**HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA, PHILADELPHIA UNIT****Plant Sale**

Thurs., May 8, 10am-2pm  
Historic Yellow Springs  
Art School Road  
Yellow Springs, PA

**Contact:**

Sue Armstrong  
Box 633  
West Chester, PA 19381  
610-696-2797

**HERB SOCIETY, SUSQUEHANNA UNIT****Herb Sale**

May 9, 12-7pm  
May 10, 9am-4pm  
Landis Valley Farm Museum  
Lancaster, PA  
Fee includes admission to Museum.

**Contact:**

Bonnie Boothman  
717-560-5711  
215-641-2687

**HISTORIC BARTRAM'S GARDEN****Pawpaw Festival**

Sept. 13, 10am-4pm  
Historic Bartram's Garden  
54th St. & Lindbergh Blvd.  
Phila., PA 19143

**Plant Sale**

May 3, 10am-4pm  
Raindate: May 4  
Historic Bartram's Garden  
54th St. & Lindbergh Blvd.  
Phila., PA 19143

**Contact:**

Historic Bartram's Garden  
54th St. & Lindbergh Blvd.  
Phila., PA 19143  
215-729-5281

**HOBBY GREENHOUSE ASSOCIATION, DELAWARE VALLEY CHAPTER****Symposium**

Sept. 20, TBA  
Location TBA  
**Bi-monthly Meeting**  
3rd Sat., Sept.-May  
(call for location & time)

**Auction**

June 21, 10am-2pm  
Horticulture Center,  
Fairmount Park  
Phila., PA 19131

**Contact:**

Bernie Wiener  
229 Ellis Road  
Havertown, PA 19083  
610-446-2160

**HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH JERSEY****Flower Shows**

May 13, 7:30pm  
Sept. 9, 7:30pm  
Cherry Hill Community Center  
820 Mercer Street  
Cherry Hill, NJ 08034  
Free Admission

**Meeting**

September-June  
Second Tuesday, 7:30pm  
Cherry Hill Community Center  
820 Mercer Street  
Cherry Hill, NJ 08034

**Contact:**

Rita B. Hojnowski  
517 Cecelia Drive  
Blackwood, NJ 08012  
609-227-0599

**DELAWARE VALLEY HOSTA SOCIETY****Slide Lecture & Hosta Sale**

**Jim Wilkins, VP of American Hosta Society**  
March 15, 1pm "Hosta Sale"  
March 15, 2pm "Lecture"  
Ramanda Inn  
Rt. US 1 & 202  
Chadds Ford, PA 19317  
610-358-1700  
Free & Open to Public

**Garden Visit & Hosta Auction**

June 7, 1-4pm, 2pm  
Auction  
David & Roberta Chopko  
93 Intervale Road  
Boonton, NJ 07005  
201-334-2116  
Rain or Shine  
Free & Open to Public

**Contact:**

Warren Pollack  
202 Hackney Circle  
Wilmington, DE  
302-478-2610  
fax: 302-477-1674

**THE AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY, REGION 19****American Iris Society Show, Region 19**

Sunday, June 22, 12-4pm  
Haggerty Education Center  
Frelinghuysen Arboretum  
53 E. Hanover Ave.  
Morristown, NJ 07960

**Plant Sale**

Sat., June 26, 9am-1pm  
Haggerty Education Center  
Frelinghuysen Arboretum  
53 E. Hanover Ave.  
Morristown, NJ 07960

**Contact:**

Nancy Strong  
Frelinghuysen Arboretum  
P.O. Box 1295  
Morristown, NJ 07962  
201-326-7600



The Delaware Chester Rose Society planned a garden visit and meeting to Bill Hyler's home in Hershey's Mill, West Chester, Pa.

**DELAWARE VALLEY IRIS SOCIETY****Plant Sale**

Time & Date TBA  
Jenkins Arboretum  
631 Berwyn Baptist Rd.  
Berwyn, PA 19312

**Contact:**

Charles & Betsy Conklin  
91 Duncan Lane  
Springfield, PA 19064  
610-544-3984

**DIAMOND STATE IRIS SOCIETY****Bearded Iris Show**

May, Date & Time TBA  
Location TBA

**Fall & Spring Meeting**

Time & Date TBA  
(call for info.)

**Plant Sale**

Sat., July 12  
Lantana Sq. Shopping Center  
Rte. 7  
Hockessin, DE

**Contact:**

Mrs. Martin  
116 Meridian Drive  
Hockessin, DE 19707  
302-998-2414

**MID-ATLANTIC LILY SOCIETY****Lily Show**

June 21, 12-5pm  
June 22, 12-5pm  
Longwood Gardens  
Kennett Square, PA 19348

**Bulb Sale**

Sun., Oct. 26, 12-3pm  
Jenkins Arboretum  
Devon, PA

**Contact:**

Ellen Ressler  
510 E. Conestoga St.  
New Holland, PA 17557  
717-354-9556

**PENNSYLVANIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY****"A Plant Celebration at the Mansion" & Plant Sale**

May 3, 10am-4pm  
May 4, 10am-4pm  
Centre Furnace Mansion  
1001 E. College Ave.  
State College, PA 16801  
Various speakers, book sale, family activities, and gardening supplies. Call Sarah Kelley for info.  
814-234-4779

**Contact:**

Native Plant Society  
P.O. Box 281  
State College, PA 16804  
814-238-8879

**Society Quarterly Newsletter & Bartramia available****IRVINE NATURAL SCIENCE CENTER****Native Plant Seminar & Sale**

Aug. 23, 9am-3pm  
Irvine Natural Science Center  
(located 1 mile North of Baltimore Beltway, Exit 22)  
Fee for Seminar, Sale open to the public

**Contact:**

Alison Gillespie  
St. Timothy's School  
Stevenson, MD 21153  
410-484-2413

**DELAWARE NATURE SOCIETY****Native Plant Sale**

Sat., May 3, 9am-5pm  
Sun., May 4, 10am-3pm  
Ashland Nature Center  
Brackenville & Barley Mills Rds.  
Hockessin, DE 19707

**Contact:**

Delaware Nature Society  
P.O. Box 700  
Hockessin, DE 19707  
302-239-2334

**DELAWARE ORCHID SOCIETY****March/April Plant Auction**

TBA  
(contact George Swain for details 610-388-6993)

**Meeting**

2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:30pm  
Delaware Veterans Hall  
Veteran's Drive  
(off Naaman's Road)  
Wilmington, DE

**Contact:**

Art Chadwick  
520 Meadowlark Ln.  
Hockessin, DE 19707  
302-656-1091



**DELAWARE VALLEY ORCHID COUNCIL****9th Annual Speakers Forum**

April 12, 8:30am-4pm

Travelodge Hotel

Mt. Laurel, NJ

\$25.00 (incl. lunch)

Speakers: David Banks,  
Milton Carpenter, H.P.  
NortonTopics: Australian & Pacific  
Island species, New  
Oncidiinae Intergentics &  
Red Phalaenopsis  
Hybridizing**Orchid Auction**

Sept. 25, Preview 7pm,

Auction 7:30pm

Merion Friends Activity  
Center615 Montgomery Ave.  
Narberth, PA**Monthly Mtg.**

4th Thurs., Jan.-Oct.

3rd Thurs., Nov. &amp; Dec.

Merion Friends Activity  
Center615 Montgomery Ave.  
Narberth, PA**Contact:**

Lois Duffin

7411 Boyer St.

Phila., PA

215-248-3626

fax: 215-248-0303

**SANDPIPER ORCHID SOCIETY****Meeting**4th Thursday of Each Month,  
7:30pm

Atlantic County Library

Mays Landing, NJ

Membership: \$15 Single  
membership, \$20 Family  
membership**Orchid Auction**

August 28

Location TBA

Open to public

**Contact:**

Judy Mutschler

609-965-0046

fax: 609-965-1091

**SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA ORCHID SOCIETY****42nd Eastern Orchid****Conference**

Oct. 24-26

Holiday Inn

King of Prussia, PA

**1998 Orchid Show**

Feb. 5-8

King of Prussia Mall, Court

King of Prussia, PA

**Meeting**2nd Wednesday, Sept.-  
June, 7:30pm

Freedom Foundation

Rte. 23

Valley Forge, PA

**Contact:**

Deborah Robinson

2604 Horseshoe Trail

Chester Springs, PA

610-827-7445 (evenings)

**SOUTH JERSEY ORCHID SOCIETY****Plant Auction**

Nov. 15, Time TBA

Wenonah Methodist Church

Wenonah, NJ 08090

**Monthly Meeting**

3rd Sunday, Sept.-June

Wenonah Methodist

Church

Wenonah, NJ 08090

**Contact:**

Barbara Inglessis

204 Winding Way

Moorestown, NJ

609-722-0393 or

609-589-7246

**PERENNIAL PLANT ASSOCIATION****Perennial Plant Symposium**

Aug. 3-9

Sheraton Imperial Hotel

Raleigh, NC

Fee TBA

**Contact:**

Dr. Steven Sill

3383 Schirtzinger Rd.

Hilliard, OH 43026

614-771-8431

**DORETTA KLABER CHAPTER, AMERICAN PRIMROSE SOCIETY****Seed Sowing Meeting**

1st Saturday in February,

10am

Raindate—3rd Saturday in

February

Plyler Residence

18 Bridle Path

Chadds Ford, PA

\$5.00 membership fee

**Plant Sale & Picnic****Meeting**

TBA

\$5.00

membership fee

**Contact:**

Dot Plyler

18 Bridle Path

Chadds Ford, PA

610-459-3969

**AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY, GREATER PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER****Annual Plant Sale & Truss****Show**

Sat., May 10, 10am-4pm

Morris Arboretum

100 Northwestern Ave.

Chestnut Hill, PA 19118

**Meeting**

Thur., Mar. 13, 7:30pm

Morris Arboretum

100 Northwestern Ave.

Chestnut Hill, PA 19118

Annual Banquet, Apr. 12

St. Davids Golf Club

**Contact:**

Howard H. Roberts

1319 Wendover Rd.

Rosemont, PA 19010

610-525-4731

**AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY, VALLEY FORGE CHAPTER****Truss Flower Show**

Sun., May 11, 1-5pm

Longwood Gardens

Kennett Square, PA 19348

Longwood Admission Fee

**Plant Sale**

Sat., May 3, 9am-3pm

Sun., May 4, 11am-3pm

Jenkins Arboretum

631 Berwyn Baptist Rd.

Devon, PA 19333

**Contact:**

W. Robert Stamper

2107 Ridge Way

East Greenville, PA 18041

215-541-0427

**DELAWARE ROSE SOCIETY****Annual Rose Show**

Sun., Sept. 7, 1-5pm

Terrace Restaurant

Longwood Gardens

Kennett Square, PA

(call for exhibitor info., no exhibitor fee)

Longwood Admission

**Contact:**

Don &amp; Marie Myers

1001 Timber Wyck Road

Wilmington, DE 19810

302-529-7787

**DEL-CHESTER ROSE SOCIETY****37th Annual Rose Show**

Sat., June 14

(Roses entered 6am-10am)

Open to Public 1-6pm

Terrace Restaurant

Longwood Gardens

Kennett Square, PA

Longwood Admission Fee

No fees for exhibitors

**Pruning Demonstration**

Sat., Apr. 5, 10am

Memorial Rose Garden

St. Maximilian Kolbe

Church

15 E. Pleasant Grove Rd.

West Chester, PA

(off Rt. 202 S)

**Contact:**

Pat Pitkin

923 Springwood Dr

West Chester, PA 19382

610-692-4076

**PHILADELPHIA ROSE SOCIETY****51st Annual Rose Show**

Sun., June 1

Roses entered 7am-10:30am

Open to Public 1-5pm

Widener Education Center

Morris Arboretum

Chestnut Hill, PA 19118

Admission \$3

No fees for exhibitors

**Penn-Jersey Rose****Convention**

Sept. 12-14

King of Prussia Holiday

Inn

260 Goddard Blvd.

King of Prussia, PA

19406

**Contact:**

Pat Pitkin

923 Springwood Drive

West Chester, PA 19382

610-235-2014

**WEST JERSEY ROSE SOCIETY****Rose Show**

June 7

Entries 7am-10:30am

Open to Public 1-8:30pm

Echelon Mall, Strawbridge

Court

Voorhees, NJ 08043

Free Admission

**Monthly Meetings**1st Wednesday (except  
January & July)

Voorhees Community

Center

White Horse &amp;

Haddonfield Berlin

Rd.

Voorhees, NJ

**Contact:**

Rose Schwarz/kopt

54 Meadowrue Drive

Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054

609-235-2014

**DELAWARE WATER GARDEN SOCIETY****Pond Tour**

July TBA

Potluck/Picnic

Members &amp; prospective members only

**Contact:**

Fred Weiss

339 Valley Rd.

Merion Station, PA 19066

610-667-7545

**INTERNATIONAL WATER LILY SOCIETY****Annual Meeting, Denver, CO**

Aug. 9-13 Tours &amp; Symposium

Aug. 14-16 Post Symposium Tour

**Contact:**

International Water Lily

Society

P.O. Box 2309

Columbia, MD

410-730-8396

fax: 410-730-9619

**BOWMAN'S HILL WILDFLOWER PRESERVE****Earth Day Celebration**

Sun., April 20, 12-5pm

Bowman's Hill Wildflower

Preserve

Washington Crossing Historic

Park

New Hope, PA 18938-0685

**Plant Sale**

May 10-11, 10am-4pm

Bowman's Hill

Wildflower Preserve

Washington Crossing

Historic Park

New Hope, PA

18939-0685

May Pole Dancing, Book

Signing, Refreshments

&amp; Lectures

**Contact:**

Bowman's Hill Wildflower

Preserve

Washington Crossing

Historic Park

New Hope, PA 18938-0685

215-862-2924

**BRANDYWINE CONSERVANCY WILDFLOWER & NATIVE PLANT GARDENS****Free Day at the Brandywine****Conservancy**

June 26, 9:30am-4:30pm

Brandywine River Museum

US Rte. 1

Chadds Ford, PA 19317

**Plant Sale**

May 10-11,

9:30am-4:30pm

Brandywine River

Museum Courtyard

US Rte. 1

Chadds Ford, PA 19317

**Contact:**

Brandywine Conservancy

US Rte. 1

Chadds Ford, PA 19317

610-388-2700

**For Future Listings**

*Green Scene* publishes a list of area plant society meetings and plant sales annually in the March issue of *Green Scene*. List one major meeting and one plant sale only. **DEADLINE: October 30.** Please follow format used here. Write to: Erin Fournier, PHS, 100 North 20th Street — 5th floor, Philadelphia, PA 19103-1495.

Erin Fournier, Publications assistant, studies Horticulture and Landscape Architecture at Temple University. Summers spent toiling in a variety of plant nurseries and long winters working in bookshops led her to the perfect career combination at *Green Scene* magazine and the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society.



# Reaching for the Himalayan Heights at the Philadelphia Flower Show



by Margaret P. Bowditch

I like a challenge. For six years I've tried forcing blue Himalayan poppies (*Meconopsis*) into bloom for the Philadelphia Flower Show. Because Philadelphia's climate is different from that of the Himalayas I have my work cut out for me. Philadelphia's muggy summer heat kills the poppies off. Often that heat starts in June and continues well into September. The fact that in nature *Meconopsis* flowers in late spring or early summer makes timing for an early March show a bit tricky but that's much easier than keeping them alive in the Philadelphia area, I've failed so many more times than I've succeeded, I can hardly claim to offer a recipe for success.

One advantage I have is a summer garden on the coast of Maine where I spend July and August. That climate offers growing conditions more to the poppies' liking — cool summers with winter snow cover. They do well growing along with other typical Maine border plants: delphinium, monkshood, and lupines. I horrify plant snobs by growing the rare Himalayan poppies next to such standard border plants as daylilies. They all live in an east-facing border in an acid soil and get fertilized with 5-10-5 or a water soluble 15-30-15 for a quick fix if the leaves look pale. I use well-rotted sawdust or compost as a mulch. I ask our caretaker to put spruce boughs over the garden in winter.

Over the years I've gotten my poppies from various sources: from seed offered by plant societies, from a nursery in Maine (Surry Gardens) and from mail-order sources (Heronswood and Russell Graham) in the Pacific Northwest, the part of the country where these poppies do best. In late August I dig up three promising plants from my Maine garden and pot them up for the Labor Day weekend drive to Philadelphia. Over the years I've brought down three different kinds of blue poppies:

*Meconopsis betonicifolia*, *M. grandis*, and a hybrid, *M. ×Sheldonii*. Along with lots of other plants I pack the poppies into boxes with great care for the two-day drive. If those days are sunny I make only brief daytime "pit stops." More than a few minutes in a closed car would bake them to an early death. Then they face the hazards of September in Philadelphia where spells of hot, muggy weather may bring decline or demise. If they survive September they live happily through the cooler months of fall and about Thanksgiving I tuck them into a cold frame.

In early January I take them out of the frame and bring the lifeless-looking specimens into an enclosed cold porch. When they begin to show signs of growth I move them down into the cellar where I have fluorescent plant lights running 16 to 18 hours a day. On sunny days I carry the plants up to a south-facing window and return them to the lights at night. Following this routine I had a plant that made it to the Show in bloom and won a couple of ribbons in 1992. After that I had three years of failure.

Then in February of 1996 I had two promising specimens and one sickly looking runt. When I went to move the runt out of the way to get the better plants and take them upstairs I noticed the runt had a flower bud. Its foliage, however, was a disaster — galloping interveinal chlorosis or some such disfiguring ailment. I got on the telephone for advice from various sources — Dan Hinkley at Heronswood, Jim Dickinson at Surry, and several other knowledgeable people. Suggestions for solving the problem included adding magnesium, iron, S.T.E.M. (soluble trace element minerals), acidifying the soil, and using Superthrive. Bearing one sickly leaf I rushed off to Primex Garden Center for advice and supplies. Nobody was optimistic

about my transforming that leaf into something acceptable at the Flower Show. My friend Lee Raden, always a source of advice and encouragement and co-chair of Horticultural Passing at the Show, jokingly suggested that if nothing worked I could enter it in a variegated foliage plant class — a little horticultural gallows humor. I went for broke and used all the suggested remedies. Luckily one or more of them worked and all new foliage emerged a healthy green. I ran the lights for longer hours but when the flower bud elongated I had to be sure it didn't get too close to the warmth of the lights. The flower bud opened on February 29th and I pondered the choice of classes in which I could enter on Friday, March 1st. I decided on hardy herbaceous perennial in bloom.

The next hurdle was getting it accepted as an entry for the horticultural class I'd chosen. I presented it to Bob Way, one of the expert passers assigned to that class. Bob wisely suggested that I remove the last off-color leaf to improve the looks of the plant. When I returned from that task Bob was busy with another entrant so I asked another passer, Robert Herald, to take it. He decided to pull my leg a bit and pretended that it was a problem plant and called another expert over for consultation. In a stage whisper Robert said that my poppy had "giant aphids, mealy bugs, a virus and was incorrectly named." I enjoyed



photo by Ruth Crocker

*Meconopsis ×sheldonii* with the blue and Best of Day award at the 1996 Philadelphia Flower Show. The plant was forced successfully in the author's Philadelphia home after several failed attempts at forcing in previous years.



the horticultural horseplay and, as the plant had none of those disqualifying problems, it was accepted. Later during the judging it got a blue and then the ultimate accolade, Best of Day. In six years of trying I've only gotten two poppies out of the 18 I've tried into the Show. Surely Atlantic City offers better odds. But I'll try again. Over the years I've had my share of ribbons for other plants which weren't nearly as much trouble but they just don't mean as much as the elusive *Meconopsis* successes. Keep your fingers crossed for me this year.

photo by Margaret P. Bowditch

### Sources of *Meconopsis* Plants

Russell Graham  
Purveyor of Plants  
4030 Eagle Crest Rd., NW  
Salem, OR 97304  
(503) 362-1135  
Catalog \$2 Mail order

Heronswood Nursery, Ltd.  
7530 NE 288th St.  
Kingston, WA 98346-9502  
(360) 297-4172  
Catalog \$4 Mail order

Surry Gardens  
P.O. Box 145, Rte. 172  
Surry, ME 04684  
(207) 667-4493  
Plants carried at nursery  
most summers.

### Seed Sources

(Membership required for Societies)

Arrowhead Alpines  
P.O. Box 857  
Fowlerville, MI 48836

The Hardy Plant Society  
Administrator Mrs. Pam Adams  
Little Orchard, Great Comberton  
Nr. Pershore, Worcs.  
WR 10 3DP, United Kingdom

The North American Rock Garden  
Society — NARGS  
P.O. Box 67  
Millwood, NY 10546-0067

Thompson and Morgan  
P.O. Box 1308  
Jackson, NJ 08527-0308

•  
Peggy Bowditch taught Horticulture at Temple University and now lectures frequently to garden groups. She has exhibited at the Philadelphia Flower Show for 25 years.

*the green scene / march 1997*



*Meconopsis* grows beside daylilies  
in the author's Maine border.



# *Subtropical Winter in the North*



by Ruby Weinberg



*Bougainvillea 'Scarlet O'Hara'. Contrary to its name, under glass its bracts are rose-colored and not scarlet. Calamondin in background.*



If you are one of the many northern gardeners who debates whether or not to move to a warmer climate every winter, then consider this: why not stay put, enjoy your spring, summer, and autumn garden, but bring a bit of the subtropics into your life to brighten the frigid scenery of the dormant season. This was my solution, and for many years now, as I open my eyes in bed on a typical New Jersey morning, the view is of a green and flowering world. Outdoors, it may be snowing, but in the greenhouse adjacent to our bedroom, every bit of the wan sunshine is conserved and amplified.

Through a sliding glass door, I can see the rosy bracts of a bougainvillea, the blue sprays of *evolvulus*, and the silvery leaves and countless pink puffs of a *Kalanchoe pumila* in full bloom. The prima donnas of the moment are hung as close to the door as possible.

The cycle begins in mid-September when you'll probably find me busier than a squirrel collecting and stashing away its winter sustenance of acorns. Only my cache is food for the soul rather than for the body. All summer I've been growing exotic subtropical plants in clay pots on either our sunny patio or shady deck. They need special attention now, sometimes pruning or repotting into larger containers before being hauled into the greenhouse. It's a tight squeeze, like fitting one's wardrobe into a handbag rather than a steamer trunk, so there is always a handful of leftovers. Some find a home with friends. Sadly, others are relegated to the compost heap. When my autumn greenhouse chores are complete for the moment, I'll invite you to enter. If you're taller than I am, 5 ft., you'll have to duck in places to avoid hitting your head on a few of the cascaders I've had to hang over the center ridge. Most of the plants are suspended in two tiers on the front glass wall. A few stand on the floor or on two separate benches. The glasshouse is only 6½ ft. by 27 ft., but since it faces south by southwest, it's an ideal situation for growing some of the subtropical perennials and shrubs that I dearly love. The thermometer is set at 58°F night-time temperature.

Make no mistake. This is no conservatory designed as an indoor garden. It's a cold-season growing space. Outdoors, I try to curb my collector's instinct to achieve a serene, interesting garden, but under glass it's quite another matter. When the days are cold and dreary, there is nothing quite as pleasant to me as a heterogeneous assemblage of exotic specimens. They are a



photo by Martin Wemberg

The greenhouse, off the author's bedroom, was photographed on a cold day in January.

reminder of the world beyond my sphere, especially those worlds that we have visited. If you, too, are searching for international exotics for a greenhouse, solarium, or sunny window, there is one worry that you will not have. When importing untested garden plants, there is always the possibility of unwittingly introducing into the environment an exuberant runaway. Subtropicals will not survive north of Zone 8 or 9

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*The glasshouse is only 6½ ft. by 27 ft., but since it faces south by southwest, it's an ideal situation for growing some of the subtropical perennials and shrubs that I dearly love. The thermometer is set at 50°F night-time temperature.*

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without extraordinary and isolated protection.

My greenhouse is suspended in front of and over our garage on one side of the house. Originally, when our house was built, this space was a small deck with the glass door already in place. Now, there is also a second door and a few steps leading down to the garden.

This second-story site might seem strange, but it was determined by three factors: easy accessibility, water and electricity close at hand, and a sunny exposure. Life in our cold little valley means a good deal of snow, ice, and difficulty in walking about our property. Therefore, a close-at-hand plant paradise had much to recommend it. However, when my husband installed this curved eaves lean-to structure 20 years ago, he was limited by the peculiar roofline

of our house. It permitted a width of only 6½ ft. Greater size elsewhere was sacrificed for convenience, a compromise I was willing to make.

The automatic ceiling vent and heating facility my husband also installed has made my greenhouse a pleasure rather than a burden. There is one potential problem. On the occasional nights when outdoor temperatures hover near zero or below, an alarm sounds in the bedroom, and we must put into action our portable electric heater. The greenhouse, fitted with baseboard radiators, is ordinarily heated from our house hot water boiler, not quite sufficient in bitter cold weather.

Subtropicals are not the only thing I grow, for the greenhouse also has a corner fitted with a 3 ft. × 4½ ft. bench with a heating mat and a mist system devised by my spouse. This is where my garden seedlings are germinated and cuttings are rooted. Luckily, when these small plants have achieved sufficient size, out they go to a cold frame to avoid crowded chaos under glass.

The technical problems I gladly leave to my capable husband, for it is the plants, themselves, that get my attention. Some are from cuttings or small plants collected on trips to South Florida, France, South Africa, Costa Rica, etc. Wherever we travel, possible subtropical additions to the collection are scrutinized, thus adding much to the pleasure of the trip, itself. Sometimes, I bring a few treasures home as unrooted cuttings, far easier to import and carry than growing plants. Seeds, also, are occasionally a success. Any subtropical seed list that I can get hold of is fair game. Even the North



## Subtropical Winter in the North



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*Schlumbergera x buckleyi*, the Christmas cactus, photographed December 1996. A long-lived plant that blooms every year on December 25th.

American Rock Garden's seed list has yielded a few prizes. I also purchase a few small additions from commercial U.S. specialists.

Horticultural perfection usually eludes me because of the crowded conditions, and then, too, not all of my hundred or so plants are rare or highly unusual. It is beauty of bloom that I'm after. A few, like *Alocasia x amazonica* or *A. 'Green Velvet'* (*A. x amazonica*, *x A. micholitziana*) are grown strictly for their rich, velvety elephant-ear leaves interspersed with distinct white ribs. When I first tried the former, its situation on the floor proved too cold one blustery night, and the alocasia dropped its foliage. The upturned pot, however, yielded many tiny tubers that started to grow and eventually yielded five plants instead of the one. Now, I place alocasias on my heating mat for a little extra warmth when needed.

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***The South Florida grower who sold the ravenia to me found this native of Taiwan in a Hawaiian garden, and told me that only five other gardeners in the world grow it. Now, isn't that enough to arouse the curiosity of any true plant lover?***

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The seasonal display starts in late September when two of my three bougainvilleas begin their everlasting show, *B. 'Scarlett O'Hara'* plus a double-flowered white. The variegated third, a red bloomer, may be 'Raspberry Ice'. All the bougainvilleas must be carefully pruned into compact shrubs to keep them within 10-in. pots, and so, I often must clip away the overly long flowering stems of the varie-

gated specimen. Oddly, the first two are more floriferous under glass than on my patio in summer.

By early October, *Schlumbergera truncata* hybrids begin to open, often far too early to be called Thanksgiving cactus. Recently, a grower told me that when the holiday occurs late in the month, she leaves the plants outdoors until the second week of November, covering them only when frost threatens. This delays the peak of bloom for a great Thanksgiving display. I may try that the next time the holiday is delayed because the luscious pink, fuchsia, and white cultivars appearing on time are worth a little extra consideration.

The so-called butter-yellow bloomer *Schlumbergera 'Cambridge'* that I purchased from a specialist is an exception; it came with the warning that if the temperature drops lower than 50°F, the blooms will





A yellow-flowered lantana brings a bit of sunshine into a dreary winter day.

have a pinkish cast. Mine, at the required temperature, is a vivid orange! It is a puzzle I have yet to solve. My one huge specimen of the Christmas cactus *Schlumbergera xbuckleyi* puts on a few early flowers and then peaks at Christmas as its name implies.

For many months, *Citrofortunella mitis*, the calamondin orange, sports both fragrant orange blossoms as well as small fruits. Grown for over 10 years, it now occupies a 14-in. pot and is so heavy that I can no longer move it outdoors in summer.

Any flora from New Zealand always interests me, but usually resists my successful cultivation. An exception, blooming from early December through April, is the tea plant, *Leptospermum scoparium*, also called by the Maori name manuka. I really appreciated its beauty when we used a close-up lens to photograph a tiny, double-flowered, rose-colored blossom on the hy-

brid 'Ruby Glow'. Masses of them nestle amid heather-like foliage.

*Raphiolepis indica*, the indian hawthorn, is a compact Chinese broadleaf often grown in the southwest. From cuttings, I grew two specimens with clusters of white flowers. Some have rose-pink stamens, giving the shrubs a "maiden's blush" appearance.

Similar in foliage is *Mandevilla xamabilis* 'Alice duPont' with large deep pink tubular flowers. However, by curbing its vine-like tendency, winter bloom is only sporadic.

By the turn of the year, the long, prickly ropes of the rattail, *Aporocactus flagelliformis* sport the first of many successive bursts of bloom. The pink flowers have an iridescent quality to them, but woe to anyone who touches the ropes with their finger-piercing spines.

In early spring, hybrids of my orchid cacti, *Epiphyllum*, put forth their spectacular

blossoms. Years ago, two of my specimens grew overly large. When they developed mealy bugs, I tossed them out and started again with small-flowered varieties. *E.* 'Delicate Jewels' is charming, but some of the others are growing long leaves that take up quite a bit of space.

New to my collection are the two shrubs *Brunfelsia lactea*, or lady-of-the-night, and *Ravenia spectabilis*. I hope I will be able to keep the former at 2 to 3 ft. and still produce good winter flowers. Its large creamy blooms are said to be exceedingly fragrant.

I do not know much about the ravenia, either, a shrub with deep red blooms. The South Florida grower who sold it to me found this native of Taiwan in a Hawaiian garden, and told me that only five other gardeners in the world grow it. Now, isn't that enough to arouse the curiosity of any





Calamondin orange: a bushy little tree that blossoms and fruits on and off all year long. With orange fruits and blossoms on almost any winter day in New Jersey, who needs Florida?

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true plant lover?

A few other current favorites for mid-winter bloom are the *Kalanchoe pumila* mentioned before; *Ruellia makoyana*, with tube-like pink blooms amid olive-green, silver-veined leaves; a fancy leafed, highly variegated pelargonium hybrid, name unknown; a *Pittosporum tobira* brought home from a French garden with more white variegation than is usually seen; and a deep golden-flowered *Lantana montevidensis*. Lantanas are subject to white fly but with good summer care can safely be brought into the greenhouse.

I especially welcome low-growing plants. My pot of *Evolvulus glomeratus* 'Blue Daze', grown as a southern annual, seems to go on forever. It now requires a 10-in. pot. *Evolvulus* is an indicator plant, the first of all my specimens to tell me that it's time to water. *Evolvulus arizonicus*, another species morning glory that I grew from seed, has even more delicate flowers and foliage, and is equally long lasting and everblooming.

*Brachycome*, the Swan River daisy, rescued from my summer planter box, repotted and brought into the greenhouse, continues non-stop to produce its darling 1-in.-wide yellow-centered purple daisies. In spring, quite a few cultivars of Australian native plants now appear in the marketplace, but the brachycome grows better for me indoors than out.

For many years, I have treasured other exciting subtropicals as well, most of them long since gone. It is prudent to recognize that some have a short life expectancy under glass; others outgrow their welcome. A few of those favorites include *Plumbago auriculata*, the cape plumbago, with great bouquets of blue flowers; *Lycanthes rantonettii* [*Solanum rantonettii*], the purple potato bush (blooms, not fruits, are purple); and last, but not least, *Anisodonteia x hypomandarum*, the African mallow. This plant must be renewed from cuttings every few years if one is to enjoy a maximum number of perky, pansy-like petals around a raised

center. The mallow has such a warm look that if brought outside in winter, it might melt the deepest snow.

Since experts say that there is a minimum of 200,000 subtropical and tropical plants in the world, my collections represent just a dewdrop in the bucket. However, new greenhouse owners should not be overwhelmed by too many possible choices. First, confine yourself to those best suited to the space, light, and minimum night temperature that you can provide. Availability is, of course, paramount, but treasure hunts are always an exciting part of living. Then too, at the top of my list will always be subtropicals that bloom naturally any time between October and early April.

### Plant and Seed Sources for Subtropicals

#### Seed:

Thompson and Morgan  
P.O. Box 1308  
Jackson, NJ 08527-0308  
Phone: 800-274-7333

#### Plants:

Glasshouse Works  
Church St., P.O. Box 97  
Stewart, OH 45778-0097  
Phone: 614-662-2142  
Fax: 614-662-2120

Logee's Greenhouses  
141 North Street  
Danielson, CT 06239  
Phone: 860-774-8038  
Fax: 860-774-9932  
Catalog \$3.00 (refundable)

Rainbow Gardens  
(flowering jungle succulents)  
1444 E. Taylor Street  
Vista, CA 92084  
Phone: 619-758-4290  
Fax: 619-945-8934  
Catalog \$2.00

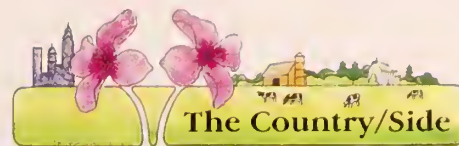
Tropical Paradise  
(exotic plants)  
5060 S.W. 76th Avenue  
Davie, FL 33328  
Phone: 305-791-2029  
Fax: 305-791-7858  
No catalog, no mail order,  
huge selection

Ruby Weinberg, a free-lance garden writer and horticultural consultant, is also an active member of the North American Rock Garden Society. Her tastes run the gamut from tiny alpine species to landscape plants to full-blown tropical exotics.



# Hot Pruning: Burning of Ornamental Grasses

by Richard L. Bitner



Everyone is growing ornamental grasses nowadays. Plants that were a novelty only 10 years ago are in every garden catalog this spring. Home gardeners here in the countryside are just starting to use them as accents in the flower border but designers of public spaces have made them as common a sight as junipers. Of course, we are taking to these plants for good reasons: they provide texture and motion in the garden, are attractive over a long growing season, are pest-free, and many bloom late in the gardening season. And they are low-maintenance and mostly deer-resistant.

## Low maintenance?

Yes, well. Although a few grasses benefit from staking, they are otherwise low-maintenance plants **except** for that warm day in early spring when one must cut the dormant grasses back to the ground before the new growth begins. Even with the taller grasses this is an easy task for the first few years, but after the plants have been in place for several years the clumps can easily be a foot or two in diameter. Now the cutting back becomes a daunting task for hand pruners and leaves the gardener cranky and blistered. String trimmers have been suggested for the task as well as hedge clippers or a scythe.

## An easy solution

Several years ago I first heard an easy solution for this garden chore from Rick Darke, the curator of Plants at Longwood Gardens, Kennett Square, Pa. He lectures widely on ornamental grasses and has written and edited books on their use as garden plants. His solution: light a match to the plants.

## Easy but not without risks

Darke points out that this method can be dangerous if not done carefully. I offer here some of his advice combined with my own experience. Let me emphasize here I'm talking about ornamental grasses in a contained area away from buildings and other structures.

- The burning can be done anytime during the dormant season. I enjoy looking at the golden colors of the grasses and



Burning can be a simple but risky alternative to hand-pruning ornamental grasses. Follow the guidelines; grasses catch fire very easily and burn rapidly and intensely. These grasses were burned in March of 1996.

usually wait until early March. Since it's a good idea to do it while there is still some snow cover I sometimes do it in January or February.

- Make sure it is legal in your township. Often a permit is required.
- Do not burn grasses on a windy day.
- Any recent rain will make it unlikely the grasses will light.
- **Never** use gasoline, kerosene or other chemicals to start the fire. Grasses catch fire very easily and burn rapidly and intensely. The fire can move very swiftly. I always have at least one other person present with a flat shovel to beat out any fire that spreads to an unintended area.
- It is a good idea to have a water hose handy or, in a remote area, several buckets of water.
- **Keep children and pets at a safe distance.**

This is not a game. In fact, it is a good opportunity to teach children the power of fire. Never burn grasses that are close to trees or shrubs, deciduous or evergreen. Grasses burn with an intense heat that can scorch woody plants six feet away.

- Always check your taller grasses for active bird nests. Twice I have found (and removed to safety) praying mantis egg cases.
- If the green new growth is visible you've waited too long and should hand-prune rather than burn.

Richard L. Bitner gardens on an old farm in Lancaster County. He serves on the PHS Members, Publications and Gold Medal Plant Award committees.

photo by Richard L. Bitner



# GARDEN

by William Guthrie Hengst

Each morning when I hitch my holster to my belt, I think of Paladin, hero of the TV western series "Have Gun, Will Travel." But I'm no cowboy, just an itinerant, middle-aged gardener for hire between March and November, riding the circuit of private gardens in Chestnut Hill and the nearby suburbs. The holster, a tan plastic net "Garden Master" bought at Kilian's Hardware for seven bucks, fits snugly, supporting my yellow-handled Florian ratchet-cut pruners — my trusty garden tool that's easy on hands that some days ache and creak.

I haven't had a necktie on in over a year. All part of my midlife correction course that involves no nine to five. In the early spring and fall, I wear beat-up corduroys, dungarees, sweatshirts, and long-sleeved work shirts in tan, red, or blue colors, bought at sales. And, in the summer, it's shorts and lots of T-shirts. Before heading out to work, I lace into my New Balance hiking boots. Next year, I'm getting a pair of flat-soled, ordinary work shoes so I don't track dirt in the house.

For headgear, I prefer the billed kind. There are zillions to choose from since baseball's billed cap has become the universal American wear for all heads, male and female. I keep a small arsenal, souvenirs, hats from my prep school class reunion, Monhegan Island and Whole Foods Market. This year, my favorite, the tan Friends of the Wissahickon cap, got totally blanched by the sun, like desert bones. Better that than my bald pate.

I've tried gloves, cheap cloth ones made in Singapore or Hong Kong, but they just don't work. I keep taking them off and on so I can get a better grip on things, and I either lose one within a week so the other's no good to me, or the fingers blow out. I ought to buy a good pair, but then I'd probably lose those too. But a friend told me about another form of hand wear that helps keep the finger tips from cracking — vaseline. So, for \$6.49 at Primex Garden Center, I bought a tin of "Bag Balm," an antiseptic vaseline that dairy farmers use for chapped udders. Works well on hands too.

Over winter, I'm indoors for three months of R&R, catching up on reading and writing. But I have another mission: My pruners,





# WEAR

after cutting countless stems and stalks, need sharpening, or perhaps it's time to take advantage of their lifetime replacement deal, only \$9.50. The green industry's so forgiving.

Some of my legwear, including the toughest of blue jeans, are worn through at the knees. The gaping, horizontal slits with bands of sagging threads resemble the baggy folds of skin on a bulldog's jowls, the envy of any teenager. I take them to a seamstress in Wyndmoor who says it'll be ten bucks a pair to patch the knees. "It's hardly worth it," she warns me, but I don't listen. I practice triage — discard the worst-off khakis and give her the dungarees and my favorite light gray L.L. Bean pants, which I wore and washed so many consecutive days the knees vanished.

A week later, the pants are back with carefully cross-stitched patchwork. As good as new. "They should last another two years," the seamstress advises. I'm in pig heaven as I plunk down my money and reclaim my pals. Martha Stewart, Smith & Hawken be damned! I'll stick with funky old garden wear, thank you.

William Hengst maintains private gardens as a livelihood in addition to caring for his own garden in West Mt. Airy, Philadelphia. He last wrote for *Green Scene* on the Garden Conservancy.

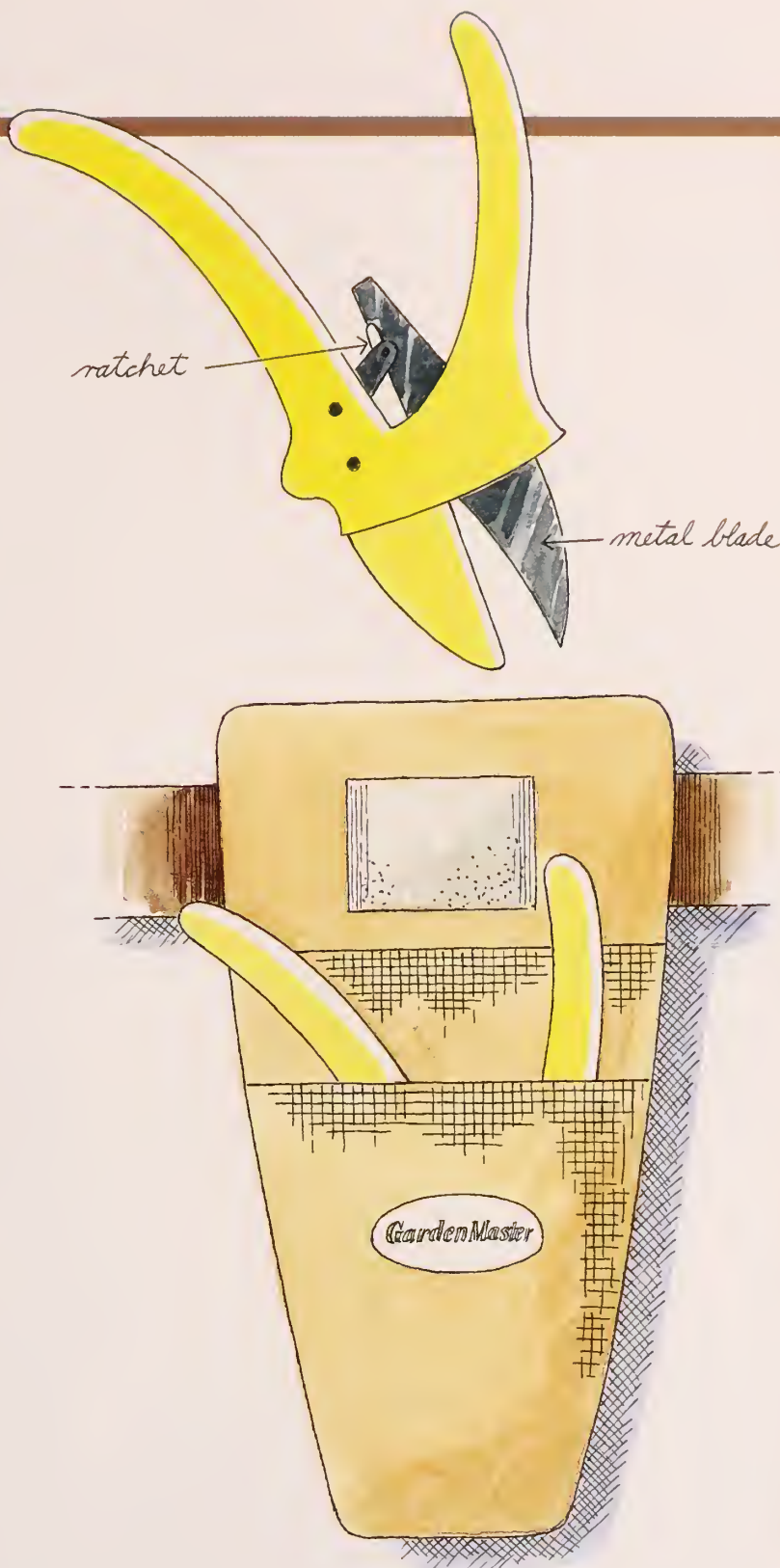
## TO OUR READERS

We'd love to see photos (preferably slides) of our readers in their favorite garden wear.

Send them to us — if we get some that would be fun to share, we'll publish them. Be sure to identify the gardener and send a few sentences describing the garb, its function and significance. Put the photographer's name on the slide as well as the person to return it to including address.

Send to:

Jean Byrne  
Editor, *Green Scene*  
Pennsylvania Horticultural Society  
100 N. 20th Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19103-1495





# *Passionate about Passion Flowers*



by Lorraine Kiefer



*Passiflora pfordtii* [*P. salato-  
caerulea*].  
photo by Lorraine Kiefer



*Always looking for an easy-to-grow but unique plant, one that is fragrant and outrageously handsome, the author was thrilled to acquire passion flowers.*

More than 30 years ago I saw my first passion flower (*Passiflora*) in Bermuda. We were greeted at the airport there by a representative from our hotel who was driving the “honeymooners” to the Castle Harbor Hotel. He had a waxed passionflower for all the women. Besides loving the fragrance of this exotic beauty, I thought it was one of the most fascinating, mysterious and desirable plants I had ever seen.

Being an avid gardener, even then, I was determined to cultivate *Passiflora* at home. When I visited the perfume factory later in the week, I was told that the plant was tropical and probably wouldn't grow in New Jersey.

It wasn't until years later that I finally found that Logee's Greenhouse catalog lists many passion flowers. I ordered the fragrant ones and started to grow them in large hanging baskets in the dining room bay window with the other fragrant plants and herbs.

We carried them outside in the summer, and back to the window in the winter. Some were housed in the little greenhouse I kept for bay, citrus, scented geraniums, and culinary herbs. I was never really satisfied with how my plants looked in winter. Although I watered them with a liquid fertilizer, I must have neglected a regular schedule at that busy child-rearing time of my life. My plants seemed pale, lackluster and were sparse bloomers. They “kicked in” in the summer, but sulked in the winter.

When I finally started to use a time-release fertilizer they did an incredible about face. The leaves became a lush vivid color and the plants really began to bloom. Because they are such thirsty tropical beauties, I watered often to satisfy their thirst at even the slightest hint of a wilt. This probably leached the fertilizer out more quickly than I replaced it with my mild “blue water” feedings. These were done randomly and didn't provide enough fertilizer to keep my plants in top condition.

Osmocote, the time-release fertilizer I used, allowed food to be released each time the plants were watered, which was often during warm, sunny weather. Although at first I used the basic indoor/outdoor fertilizer, I now alternate that with the 14-14-14 flower and vegetable mix. Both have been excellent for my plants.

I continued to try different varieties and



photo by Eric Kiefer

One of the most colorful indoor bloomers, cardinal red, *P. vitifolia* makes up for its lack of fragrance by its outrageous color. It is also one of the less demanding houseplants. Like a growing child, it needs lots of food and drink, some space, plenty of sunshine and plenty of compliments. It will fill your window with its countless blooms.

soon planted red bloomers as well as the hardier varieties, which are said to survive in Zone 7. I was surprised to see in Logee's catalog that my favorite *P. 'Incense'* is hardy here (Zone 7). In fact, just this summer I visited Joy Logee Martin at Logee's Greenhouse and saw her beautiful big plant that winters outdoors, even in Connecticut. It was planted against the outside wall of one of the greenhouses.

Since the hardy outdoor *Passiflora* is slow to come up in the spring, be patient. They will become showy when the weather assumes tropical characteristics. The most common one grown outdoors is *P. incarnata*, a wild passion flower called maypop in the South. A favorite of the butterflies, it is sometimes considered a weed in very mild climates, where it spreads rapidly.

I planted several kinds of passion flowers on my garden fence, and have really enjoyed them. I figured that since I spend a couple hours a day in my huge garden (I call it my outdoor home), I'd just plant all the passion flowers that we now grow in the nursery on the garden fence. Some are hardy, some are not, but often their survival depends on the severity of the winter.

My treat turned out to be a beautiful attraction. Once the hot weather arrived the vines literally covered the fence, overnight. The blooms on the vines are so plentiful that I stare at them in astonish-

ment. (As I write this, it's the last week in October and there are still several blooms every day.) The foliage pales rather quickly if the plants need fertilizer or water, so I apply the time-release fertilizer generously to keep up with all the watering needed for our rather sandy soil. Next year the compost and mulch will be a little thicker early in the season.

Remember that passion flowers need as much sun as possible and a place to climb. They always need to be moved up to a larger pot it seems, but a good feeding and watering program will prolong the time before each move. Their tendrils aid in their climb to embrace all in sight and these spectacular bloomers make their advance well worth any territory they occupy.

I find that some of the passion flowers are somewhat difficult to identify, while others like the red *Passiflora vitifolia* is easy to recognize. Carefree enough to be grown in the average window, this crimson bloomer flower abundantly. It has rather heavy-looking foliage that reminds me of a grape leaf. A native of Venezuela, *P. vitifolia* pretty much resists pests and disease, but needs a lot of fertilizer and water to support its vigorous growth. I often hang it in my dining room bay window where it travels with carefree abandon along the curtain rod and around the window. I give it a generous feeding of





Logee's is in Zone 5 in Connecticut, yet Joy Martin has kept this *Passiflora* 'Incense' plant growing on the outside end wall of one of the greenhouses for several years. Some protection is necessary, but the plant thrives.

time-release fertilizer in spring, a smaller amount in mid-summer while the plant is outdoors, and a scant spoonful in the fall when the plant comes in.

Although I rarely feed a plant in the fall, since the time release usually lasts through the dull days of winter, these thirsty acrobats are the exception as they need so much water their fertilizer is more rapidly leeched out. They pale when hungry, so it is easy to recognize when it's time to fertilize.

The more delicate leaf of the *Passiflora caerulea* identifies it as one of the most well known of the family. Its lacy, cut-leaf foliage is the background for large light-colored blooms that have thick, deep periwinkle crowns in the center. It blooms nicely in a sunny window and is mildly fragrant. It is one of the vines I grow along my garden fence, but not one that will make it through the Zone 7 winter of Franklinville, New Jersey, unless it is very mild this year. *P. caerulea* is like the others of its clan and needs lots of sun, food and water to make a statement in the winter.

Some of the other fragrant bloomers are *Passiflora incarnata* (sometimes hardy in the Delaware Valley), *P. 'Incense'*, *P. edulis*, and *P. alata*, just to mention a few of them. They do best if they are planted in a protected, sunny spot, usually against a building if you choose to grow them in the garden. It's important to mulch them and mark where they are since they come out late in the spring. People frequently hoe them out because they forget where they've planted the sleeping *Passiflora*.

*P. edulis* has edible fruit that can be eaten raw, spooned right from the shell. It often

makes it through the winter here if the temperatures stay around 25°F or higher. Although I have grown *Passiflora* indoors during the winter for many years, it has only been the past few years that I've tried them outdoors all year.

The vines in the windows often need to be cut back before I can untangle them enough to take them out. This is good for them as shown by the new growth that follows the pruning. Sometimes if the plant is in a tight pot and the leaves look pale, a move to a larger pot will work wonders.

### Further Reading

*The Essence of Paradise*, Tovah Martin, Little Brown and Company, Boston, MA, 1991  
*The Well Clad Windowsills*, Tovah Martin, Prentice Hall, New York, 1994

Available to members through the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society library.

### Sources

Triple Oaks Nursery and Herb Garden (attn. Lorraine Kiefer)  
 PO Box 385, Delsea Dr.  
 Franklinville, NJ 08322  
 (609) 694-4272

Logee's Greenhouse  
 141 North Street  
 Danielson's, CT 06239  
 (860) 774-8038

These natives of the Americas were first discovered by the Spanish missionaries. They saw in this beautiful flower the story of their faith, and used the large blooms to tell the meaning of Christ's passion or the Crucifixion.

They started with the center of the flower whose three stigmas were said to be emblematic of the three nails that pierced Christ's hands. The stamen, the cross; the five anthers, the wounds; the petals, the 10 faithful disciples; the three-pointed leaves, the Trinity; the tendrils, the lash or whip; the fragrance, the spices of the holy women. This legend is often told on post cards and notecards in places where it grows.

Recently on our return 30th anniversary trip to Bermuda, we again visited the passion flower perfume factory. I loved seeing the rows of passion flowers growing on trellises much the way grapes grow here in vineyards. But now I am happy that my own *Passiflora* are flourishing at home in New Jersey.

Lorraine Kiefer, a lifetime gardener, writes garden columns for five local papers as well as frequent articles for the *Green Scene*. Lorraine wrote a chapter in the Brooklyn Botanical Garden's handbook, *Fragrant Plants*. A frequent lecturer, she has been a speaker at PHS's Philadelphia Flower Show and Harvest Show, where she discusses herbs, fragrant plants, culinary plants, herb vinegars, and at the '96 Show, the fragrant landscape. Together with husband Ted and sons she operates Triple Oaks Nursery in Franklinville, N.J., where she also teaches herb, landscape and flower-arranging courses.



# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## *Sarracenia* Endangered?

Congratulations on a stunning issue of the *Green Scene*. I enjoyed all the articles in the November issue, especially Michael Bowell's.

I was distressed to find the lead story was illustrated by two photos of a mantel arrangement featuring *Sarracenia*. To display this plant in an article on decoration would seem to imply that PHS encourages its use! Like *Lycopodium* (crow's foot), *Sarracenia* is collected in the wild, and is considered endangered. It is on many state conservation lists, including Pennsylvania's.

Judges in flower shows disqualify exhibits incorporating *Sarracenia*, yet exhibitors continue to use it because it is available from the florists. This situation has come up several times at the Philadelphia Flower Show.

Is it time for an article in *Green Scene* explaining why these plants should not be purchased or collected? I hope so!

Pinkie Roe  
Mendenhall, Pa.

Co-author **Joseph Kerwin** responds:

The *Sarracenia* plants in the photograph were not collected from the wild. They were purchased at the local flower district in New York City. The plants were the product of modern technology: tissue culture — a practice in which the producer takes part of the plant and reproduces it to create a new plant. These plants were traced back to Cresco, a company in The Netherlands that is the largest producer in the world.

I spoke with Mr. Theo De Groot in Holland; he explained that the plants were reproduced through tissue culture using seeds or meristem. The culture for his original production came mainly from seeds from the wild many years ago, but plants are reproduced from subsequent populations. The stock is usually sold as plants for the horticultural market and only a small percentage is dried for the retail market.

Cresco produces hundreds of thousands of plants yearly using tissue culture. The production time to produce a salable plant has been reduced from three years to one at present. The work done at Cresco has been published in a study by Madeleine Groves at Kew, who has evaluated and studied several different growers of *Sarracenia* in

the United States and Europe. She feels comfortable saying that De Groot's plants are field-grown. Groves says you can usually tell by the health and vigor of the dried *Sarracenia* whether they were field-grown or collected from the wilds.

While I was able to track the *Sarracenia* I purchased in New York 6,000 miles across the Atlantic Ocean to the Netherlands to verify its origin, this is not always the case. Yes, plants are pulled from the wild, so it is always important to check to make sure that you question the dealer about the source of the plant.

*Sarracenia* is protected in many states, yet the land it grows on or its habitat may not always be. These plants are endangered because each year hundreds of thousands of acres of natural wet land are destroyed for development, eliminating the natural habitat of *Sarracenia* and many other flora and fauna.

Conservation is a major issue in our society today as it has been for many years, but until we learn to use our land wisely, we shall always be in conflict.

Joseph Kerwin  
Enid A. Haupt  
Conservatory Manager  
The New York Botanical Garden

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photo by Mary Lou Wolfe







# GREEN SCENE

18 27

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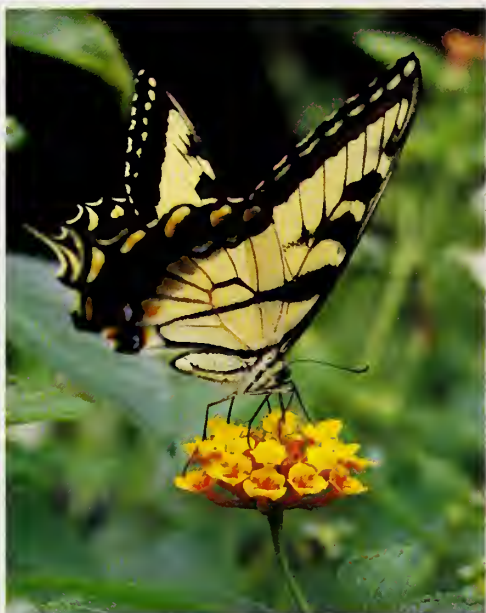


*Daylilies:  
The Flower of Light  
A visit to hybridizer  
Darrel Apps  
See page 4*





4.



19.



32.

**Front Cover:** Admirers stroll the daylily fields in mid-July, when the gardens are at peak bloom. Woodside Nursery's production beds in Bridgeton, New Jersey, display the incredible range of daylily colors and flower types. In the foreground are the deep purples of the award-winning 'Catherine Neal', and 'Siloam Gumdrop', a light pink, smaller flower with highly contrasting red eyezone. photo by Barbara Bruno

**3. Slip, Slop, Slap: The Big Cover Up**

*Jean Byrne*

**4. Daylilies, The Flower of Light**

*Mary Dolden-Veale*

**9. The Delicious, Edible Daylilies**

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**11. The Japanese Beetles are Coming and Milky Spore is Back to Challenge Them**

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**25. Lyme Disease Revisited. Maximizing Protection for the Gardener**

*H. Ralph Schumacher Jr., M.D.*

**28. Take a Second Look at Coleus**

*Ray Rogers*

**32. Taking Herbert Seriously, The Foundling Night Blooming Cereus**

*Helen T. Brunet*

**33. Classified Advertisements**

**Corrections and Additional Plant Society Listings.**

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**Contact name correction:** Warren Pollock

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Volume 25, Number 5 May/June 1997

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**The GREEN SCENE**, (USPS 955580), Volume 25, No. 5, published bimonthly, January, March, May, July, September, November, by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, a non-profit membership organization at 100 N. 20th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103. Subscription: \$12.95—Single Copy: \$2.75 (plus \$1.05 shipping). Second class postage paid at Philadelphia, PA 19103. • **POSTMASTER:** Send address change to THE GREEN SCENE, 100 N. 20th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103.

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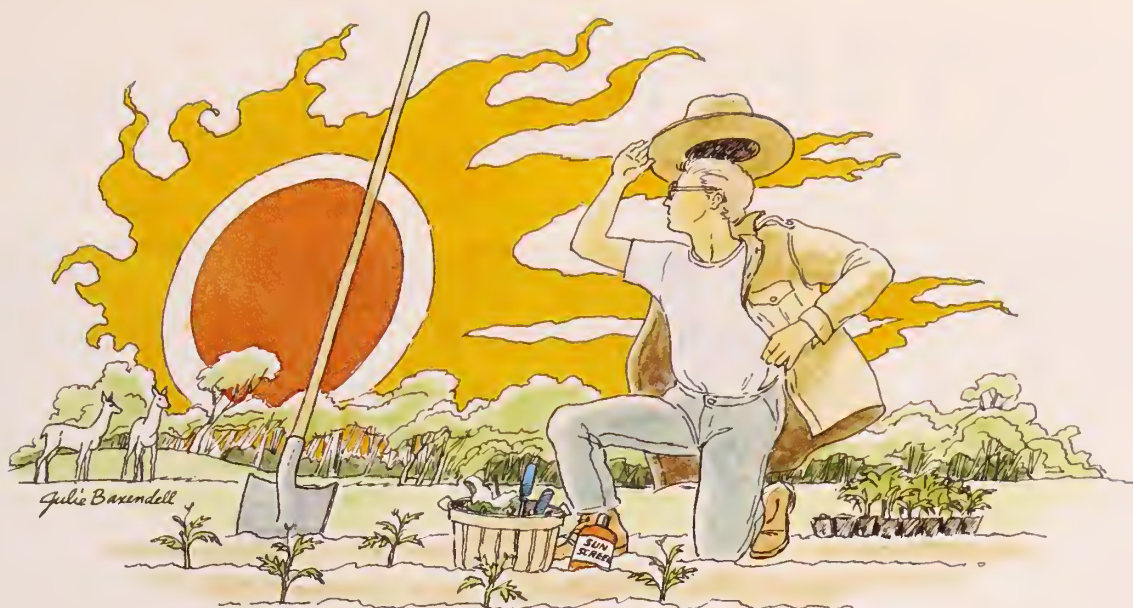
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*the green scene / may 1997*





# SLIP, SLOP, SLAP: *The Big Cover Up*

by Jean Byrne

In this issue of *Green Scene* we look at the garden as a place where diverse people find creative outlets for themselves. Former educator Darrel Apps has launched himself midlife into a successful new career as a nurseryman and can now showcase his considerable skills as one of the greatest daylily hybridizers in this country. Landscape architect Michael LoFurno shows us how he bought a derelict property and through barter with one neighbor and cooperation with another created a beautiful shared garden on both properties, not just for themselves but for the wildlife that flock to this city garden. Editor Ray Rogers, who is completing the *American Horticultural Society A-Z Encyclopedia of Garden Plants* to be launched by Dorling Kindersley in September, unwinds from his workday commute to and from Manhattan and North Brunswick by exploring the surprising and satisfying diversity of coleus. And finally, humorist Art Wolk, a past Grand Sweepstakes winner at the Philadelphia Flower Show, speculates on what makes a real gardener.

In this issue we also look at two troubling medical issues that gardeners must sometimes confront: skin cancer and Lyme disease. Both articles were written by physician-gardeners: "Weather Report: Sunshine — the not so good news" by Richard Bitner (page 14), and "Lyme

Disease Revisited" by Ralph Schumacher (page 25).

It's much more fun to read and write about plants and our successes with them than these problems. Richard Bitner writes "This [skin cancer] is not a cheerful topic. I would much rather write about *Daphne caucasica*." And we'd much rather read about the daphne. Bitner adds that while gardeners generally possess an abundance of common sense, they often display little of it about skin cancer and protection from its risk. Let's conspire to defeat the statistics cited in this issue: the risk of developing melanoma in 1930 was one in 1,500; in 1980 it was one in 250; if it continues at its present rate it will be one in 75 by the year 2000.

The cancer article was proposed by the mother of two small children, and as Bitner says it is children who are at greatest risk — children who bask longer hours in the sun and with less protection (clothing and sunscreen) than adults. On March 7, the *Wall Street Journal* published a front page story, two columns long, about the college students arriving in Florida for spring break seeking tans. The moisturizers and oils kids are using, doctors say, **magnify** the sun because they provide a slick surface that is easy to penetrate. The director of nursing in a Panama City (Florida) emergency room said phone calls and visits from seriously

sunburned kids are up considerably over last year. The students, knowing the risks, ignore them because "It's uncool to be pale."

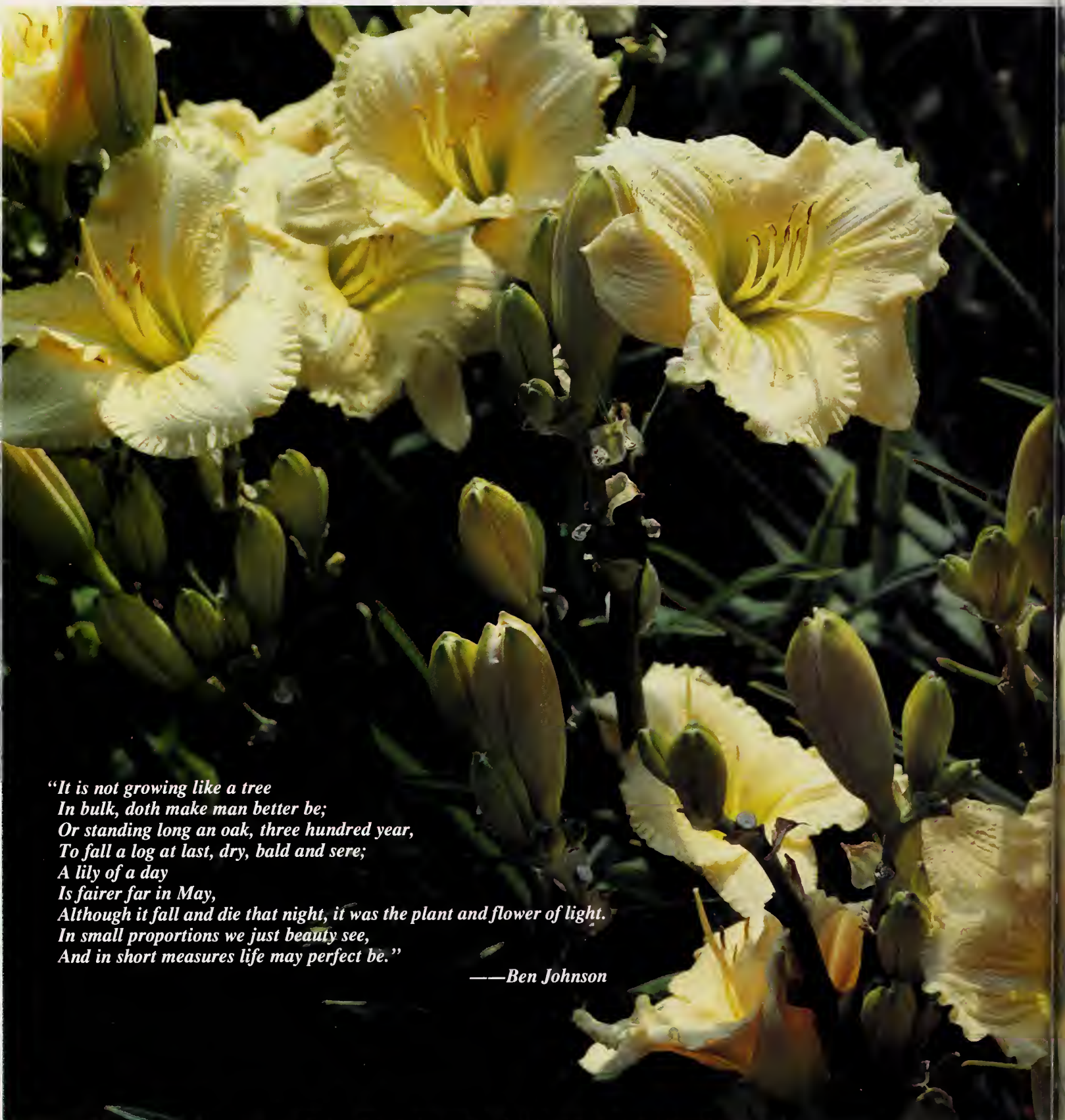
Many of us are familiar with stories about these two concerns. Recently, I heard about three harrowing long-term, misdiagnosed cases of Lyme disease, and a young friend told me about a melanoma discovered on his back. In February, Ann Landers published a letter in her *Inquirer* column from a mother whose son died of melanoma after he had asked to have a mole checked; his general practitioner saw no cause for concern, and when the malignant mole was removed six months later it was too late. The mother wrote: "Not all health care providers are trained to recognize melanoma . . . I hope [this letter about] our son's tragedy can help. Please warn your readers."

Let's consider ourselves warned. The responsibility it seems must be ours as well as the medical profession's, to be as well informed as possible about the symptoms and prevention of these diseases. And let's start covering up as Bitner tells us the Australians do when they head outdoors "Slip! Slop! Slap! — slip on a shirt, slop on some sunscreen and slap on a hat." ***And to all of us a long life and good health in the garden.***



# DAYLILIES

## *The Flower*



*"It is not growing like a tree  
In bulk, doth make man better be;  
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,  
To fall a log at last, dry, bald and sere;  
A lily of a day  
Is fairer far in May,  
Although it fall and die that night, it was the plant and flower of light.  
In small proportions we just beauty see,  
And in short measures life may perfect be."*

*—Ben Johnson*

'Sounds of Silence' possesses many of the qualities that Darrel Apps strives for: a clear pure color (cream), evergreen foliage, high bud count and a long blooming season, in this case beginning in mid-July.

*the green scene / may 1997*



# of Light

Darrel Apps, one of the foremost daylily hybridizers, dazzles with his display gardens at Woodside Nursery in Bridgeton, N.J.

by Mary Dolden-Veale



Darrel Apps sits at his computer, working on the annual mail order catalog for his business, Woodside Nursery. It is late fall, the weather grown cold enough to freeze the ground a few inches. Eight acres of raised and in-ground flower beds, surrounding the newly constructed building that houses the "executive offices" of Woodside, are all neatly buttoned up and pinned down for the winter. Apps, wearing a nicely pressed plaid flannel shirt, spotless blue jeans and an affable countenance, moves from computer terminal to his desk in the small office that overlooks his land. He begins a rapid fire summary of what led up to his 1994 move to southern New Jersey and the development of his successful, and growing, business venture specializing in cultivating daylilies, the genus *Hemerocallis* — from the Greek *hemera*, meaning day, and *callis*, meaning beauty.

If one is to accept his own introduction, Darrel Apps thinks of himself as a simple man. But the listener quickly understands that as such, he is a man of many talents. Recognized worldwide as one of the foremost daylily hybridizers, he also owns Woodside Nursery, the mostly mail-order business specializing in new daylily hybrids. Then too, he maintains a close working relationship with other nursery businesses as an expert consultant; among them Centerton Nursery several miles away, for whom Apps supplies, selects and advises on daylily offerings. And, he lectures regularly and writes — these days — sporadically. As a small businessman, he puts in long days, year-round, on tasks that cover a range of knowledge and skills — from designing and writing catalogs on a PC to digging daylilies for customers and transplanting them to pots; from figuring employment and wage taxes for the part-time workers he employs during peak growing and selling times to designing and planting the display gardens that demonstrate the beauty and range of the modern daylily. And, of course, there is the delicate art of hybridizing. He is building a business, he works hard, and he wears a lot of hats.

All the effort involved in a small nursery business seems, and is — at times literally — backbreaking. Yet, looking at Apps, a ruddy and vigorous man, and listening to him describe the first two years of business in New Jersey, one can't help but feel a little envious of the palpable satisfaction he



photo by Barbara Bruno

Dr. Apps, during last year's Dazzle Day Open House at his Woodside Nursery, enjoyed the opportunity to walk among the production beds without a shovel in hand, talking with customers and friends. Behind Apps, the showy red and yellow 'Court Troubadour'.

expresses with his eight South Jersey acres, his work and his venture into small business. "I have been blessed with a lot of energy, and I am physically strong — that was a godsend early on in this business," he says.

Apps's relatively new but promising success in the nursery and commercial hybridizing business was hard fought, and no overnight success story. As he tells it, with a touch of the tongue-in-cheek humor easily ascribed to a son of the Midwest, what led up to his entrepreneurial adventure was, as he quotes Yogi Berra, "When you come to the fork in the road, you take them." Apps's particular fork(s) in the road came in 1988, when after 12 years as head of the Department of Education at Longwood Gardens, he found himself looking for work. Darrel Apps, Ph.D., had been a scholar, educator, senior administrator and designer of gardens, an integral part of the large Longwood Gardens organization, responsible for managing a large staff, and accountable within a hierarchy of senior directors and their bosses. Suddenly in a "reorganization" Apps, at middle-age and with two daughters in high school, was out of a job and casting about for opportunities.

"I never thought I could make a living out of hybridizing," Apps says, in looking back at that time. The first year after the Longwood disappointment, his wife Marilyn went back to work in nursing. They had one and a half acres in Chadds Ford and Apps, surprising himself, made a respectable living by selling his own daylily cultivars, including some that were then intro-



# DAYLILIES *The Flower of Light*

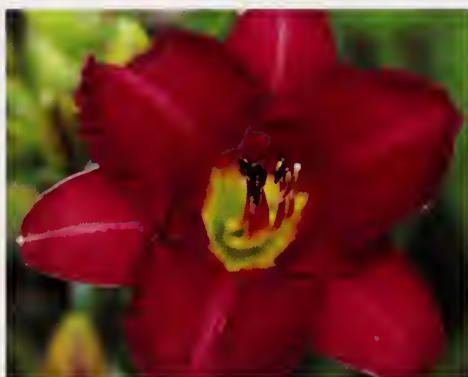
photos by Darrel Apps



'Confectioner's Dream' was a new plant introduced by Apps last year. The soft pink of the large-flowered cultivar blooms late in the season. "That's the point," says Apps.



'Starched White', with six-inch flowers and very near to a pure white, is a fairly new Apps introduction. An effective plant when combined with deep, dark colors of neighboring perennials.



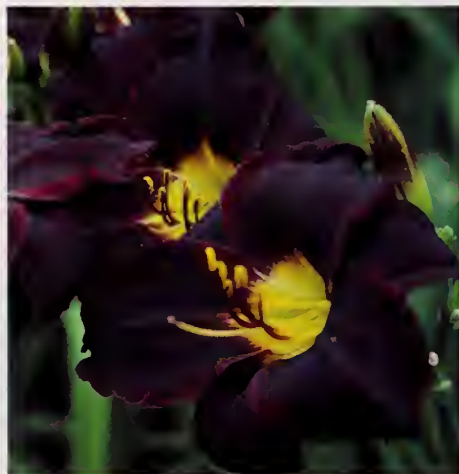
'Woodside Ruby' has been out a number of years and has won an Honorable Mention from the American Hemerocallis Society. Its intense red and high bud count yield makes it one of Apps's most popular introductions.



'Jeremy' is named for a former part-time worker at Woodside — to his delight. Beige pink it sports a violet eyezone and will rebloom.



'Doll Maker', a small 3½-inch flower that Apps bred for its pristine whiteness, has a high bud count and excellent overall form.



'Jungle Beauty' won an Honorable Mention for Apps's successful breeding of this sultry black, large-flowered cultivar with a yellow throat and high bud count.

## What makes a daylily?

Daylilies, which are herbaceous perennials, form a well-defined group known as the genus *Hemerocallis* of the lily family. Interestingly, the definitive aspect of the daylily — that each blossom opens only for "a day" (which can be anywhere from 12 to 16 hours, day and/or night) — remains a somewhat mysterious aspect to the species.

Hybridizers have been able to extend and change the hours of opening, to some extent, and certain cultivars are bred to increase the number of buds per scape, thus extending the time the plant blooms, or to rebloom — actually growing more scapes and flower buds within a season. Based on the past 50 years' accumulation of knowledge within the science of hybridizing daylilies, we have increased our understanding of the genetically programmed aspects of the flower "ripening" or "finessing." Once it has opened and pollination takes place, something triggers the release of a gas — perhaps ethylene — which begins the hyper-aging process of the individual flower, causing it to mature, and collapse. But the question, "What makes a daylily a daylily — in other words, what triggers the blossom to open, to age and to wither within a matter of hours?" is unanswered, as best I could ascertain.

Modern daylilies display a huge range of multicolored patterns and have been bred to exhibit a wide range of positive characteristics. According to Darrel Apps, there are over 40,000 named cultivars today, and as interest in this plant continues to grow, he points out that there are really two audiences for the plants that he is developing at Woodside Nursery: the connoisseurs, generally those who are members of the 10,000-member American Hemerocallis Society and who maintain an avid interest in the rare and the new cultivars available, and the designers of perennial gardens, whose interest is much more on the singular color of the plant within the overall garden palette.

The cultivars he introduces and those he selects for distribution are chosen for their overall vigor and length of bloom. Durable foliage, bloom performance, and vibrant flowers are all standards, as well as individual characteristics such as fragrance, reblooming capabilities, evergreen foliage, and bud count.

—Mary Dolden-Veale



duced by Meadowlake Gardens in North Carolina, and by consulting.

After searching for, and then spurning job offers that would have required a move away from the Mid-Atlantic area, Apps decided on a 'single' fork in the road. Over that first year, it had become clear to him that to flourish, the new business — now named Woodside — would require a new and larger site. After several fits and starts, goals set and hopes dashed, it would actually be several years before Apps was able to sell his existing home and acre and a half in Pennsylvania and move to New Jersey.

After other locations and options had been researched and exhausted, it was Apps's relationship with Centerton Nursery in Bridgeton, New Jersey, that piqued his interest in that area, and after spending "a lot of days going around looking at property with a shovel — and digging," he found the Cumberland County farmette. He liked the location, the proximity to markets, the abundance of light, availability of water, richness of the silt loam soil and the mildness of the southern New Jersey climate. Finally, Darrel Apps, son of a Wild Rose, Wisconsin, farmer, was coming back to the country.

### *The first year in business*

In March of the first year of business as Woodside Nursery of New Jersey — 1994 — he moved 25,000 daylily plants from Pennsylvania. Within that same year he created the master plan for the entire eight acres, and had sited and built the house that he and Marilyn occupy on the property. By the summer of 1996 most all of the property had been spoken for — and designated — to flower beds, display gardens, parking areas, the "executive offices" and distribution and packing areas. A greenhouse, scheduled to rise within the next year, has been delineated for location behind the offices.

Though initially, and wisely, he was concerned about starting a business that focuses on a single product, he now sees nothing but growth in the market for daylilies (the market statistics bear him out). His hard-won business success, thus far, is testament to his accomplishments in the roles of nurseryman and entrepreneur. He's planted acres with some 25,000 plants per acre. He has accomplished this with a skeleton staff — local part-time employees have been drawn in part from the Bridgeton area's mostly Hispanic work force, and Apps is proud of the work they have

contributed. By mid-March, the mail orders started streaming in from all over the country and spring his brought him back out to the fields — 10–12 hours a day. And the now-annual event — "Daylily Dazzle," the Open House scheduled each July (see box) at Woodside, will draw hundreds of people.

After a few hours of talking, and restless to get back to his work on the catalog that

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### *He now sees nothing but growth in the market for daylilies.*

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must get to the printer and sent in a timely manner to those on his rapidly growing mailing list, Apps gently ended the first meeting. "I just want to be known as a South Jersey farmer," he says, with a wink towards acknowledging that he is well aware of the Ph.D. in his back pocket. "You start with an open field," he says, "apply some organization, maintain a commitment to quality and service, and stick to it."

Later, during a follow-up trip on a mild and clear January day, Dr. Apps was taking advantage of a break in the weather, and the softer ground, to pound posts for a new wooden fence that will surround the display gardens he has designed. And in those dormant display gardens, lies another anomaly in the make-up of Darrel Apps, "a simple man." Though clearly one of the foremost experts in the specialized world of the *Hemerocallis*, his vision includes the designer's understanding of contrast and depth. As a garden designer, Apps's gardens have been known for their variety and eclecticism — designs informed by his broad knowledge and experience in all manner of garden plantings. In her 1992 book, *A Passion for Daylilies* (Harper Collins, New York, 1992), author Sydney Eddison was effusive in her praise for the 1990 Chadds Ford display garden. "The first stunning example of Darrel's skill at combining plants hits you between the eyes on arrival. A 'hot' bed along one side of the driveway blazed.... When I had recovered from this display, I sank into contented contemplation of matched borders in pastel shades of pink, lavender, silver, purple and primrose. Three compatible daylilies enhanced each other and all their neighbors — gorgeous tall purple 'Catherine Neal' was paired in one corner with the blue-pink 'Siloam Tee Tiny', which has a purple eye zone, and in the opposite corner with

'Siloam Merle Kent', another cool pink with a purple eye. Add to this bed clouds of silver and blue-gray foliage and masses of the tiny lavender-blue flowers of catmint; tall, narrow spikes of lythrum in a vivid, bluish pink; and pink bee balm, and I can't tell you what other wonderful things."

Darrel Apps believes that the way to interest people in daylilies, and to sell them, is to show how "fascinating they can be when they are mixed in with other perennials." The educator in Darrel Apps recognizes that his new display gardens at Woodside in New Jersey will grant him the opportunity to demonstrate again how people can use daylilies in an overall garden design; the businessman in Darrel Apps is quick to point out that his best customers are educated customers, "someone who is really into gardening."

With an artist's eye, Apps is aware of the magnetism of color. When his fields of daylilies are in bloom, and this year, as the new display gardens come into their own, there is no doubt that passersby and those who have made their way with intention to the gardens at Woodside, or even those who can only pour over the colorful and factual text of the Woodside catalog, will be entranced. Though he still occasionally gets the irritating drive-up customer asking "fer those yella lilies" — the same customers who, at first, think that the fellow working out in the field in rubber boots with a shovel in "just a farmer" — Darrel Apps seems pleased with the success of what he refers to as "an interesting little business."

### **Daylily Dazzle**

Sundays  
July 6 and July 20

For more information contact:

**Woodside Nursery**  
327 Beebe Run Road  
Bridgeton, NJ 08302  
Phone: 609-451-2162  
Fax: 609-451-2280

Catalog: \$3.00

Mary Dolden-Veale is a freelance writer and editor who recently moved to the Philadelphia area. She has written about design and architecture for *The Boston Globe*, *Progressive Architecture* and other publications, and is developing experience in writing about garden design and horticultural subjects.



A daylily blossom and bud  
garnish for a stir-fry  
shrimp dish.

photo by Cathy Barash



'Ethel Shepherd' has the  
exceptional sweet taste of melon.  
photo by Warren P. Leach





# The Delicious, Edible Daylilies

 by Warren P. Leach

**H**ave you eaten a daylily lately? The perennial backbone of the summer border is also the basis for some delightful dining. In *Stalking the Wild Asparagus*, naturalist forager Euell Gibbons describes the culinary qualities of many common plants. To feast on some of his wild quarry, you'd need an acquired taste. One plant on stalker Euell's list, however, is *good* tasting as well as high in vitamin A and C: the daylily, *Hemerocallis fulva*, the tawny daylily, has naturalized so well along roadsides and old house sites in the northeast, that it has become ubiquitous.

Hybrid daylilies are dependable, hardy perennials that add colorful beauty to the garden all summer long. Versatile and tolerant of diverse growing condition, they are on most gardener's top 10 list of perennials for a sunny location. Though daylilies may be a common garden plant, they are not boring. Daylily cultivars offer a long season of bloom from late May to October, and come in an array of colors and color patterns, from near-white through the color spectrum, with the exception of true blue. Their flowers range in size from two inches to eight inches across, atop scapes that vary from a towering six feet high to a lowly 18 inches.

**Daylilies have no serious insect and disease problems and therefore need no pesticide regime. So there is no need to worry about spray residue on daylilies when you collect them from your garden for eating. Picking by the roadside is not recommended.**

Daylilies have been used in the Eastern diet as a vegetable for more than a 1,000 years. Dried daylily flowers and buds are called golden needles in the Asian markets, and are a common ingredient in oriental soups. Fresh flower buds and blooms can be dipped in an egg batter and fried.

All parts of the daylily plant can be eaten. The flavors of various parts of the plant are quite distinctive. The thick fleshy roots have a taste similar to water chestnuts, the basal stems have the flavor of celery and the young, green seed pods are a cross

between new peas and asparagus. The tender young seed pods of *Hemerocallis* 'Stella d'Oro' are delicious sauteed in butter. The seed pods can be a substitute for cucumbers and be turned into pickles too.

Daylily flowers are the showiest part of the plant and the most fun to present on the dining table. The flowers have the flavor of a sweet, crisp lettuce. Subtle differences in taste can be detected between individual cultivars and flower colors. Hybridizing has produced thousands of cultivars in a diverse size and color range to add to the joys of daylily fare. The pastel colors — yellows, melons and pinks — seem to have a milder flavor than the darker red and purple-colored flowers. Here at Tranquil Lake Nursery in Seekonk, Massachusetts, we grow nearly 3,000 different cultivars of daylilies, which offers a taste tester's delight. A favorite cultivar, *Hemerocallis* 'Ethel Shepherd', with ruffled, wide-petalled gold-peach flowers, has the exceptionally sweet taste of melon.

The easiest way to use daylily flowers is as a colorful addition to a salad of mixed greens. Daylily flowers bloom for one day only and should be picked freshly opened in the morning. Remove the anthers and pistil and rinse the flower gently in water to remove any ants or earwigs that might be hiding. The rinsed flowers can be stored in a plastic bag in the refrigerator and will stay crisp until evening.

Kristin Kearney, chef and gardener, suggests that the delicate sweetness of daylilies is complemented best by a delicate mix of greens. A mesclun mix of baby lettuces and greens is perfect, or you can create a less expensive approximation by hand tearing a mix of any of the following: oakleaf, red or green leaf lettuces, mizuna greens, spinach, endive, radicchio and arugula.

Kris recommends a light dressing — no mayonnaise please! Balsamic or sherry vinegars have a touch of sweetness that complement the daylilies without overwhelming them. The ingredients of a vinaigrette are: sherry or balsamic vinegar, extra virgin olive oil, salt, pepper, dijon

mustard (optional). Combine the vinegar and oil in a 3-1 proportion: three parts oil to one part vinegar; salt and pepper to taste, and if you like mustard, about a teaspoon of mustard per 1/4 cup of vinaigrette.

Small-flowering daylilies whose bloom are 3 inches or less across are ideal for stuffing. Hors d'oeuvres made of tiny colorful daylily flowers stuffed with smoked salmon with cream cheese and capers are as tantalizingly eye-popping as they are to pop in your mouth. Try piping a favorite canape-filling recipe into a daylily for your next garden party. The reblooming *Hemerocallis* 'Stella d'Oro' will produce a long season of flowers for stuffing. Small-flowered daylilies add a delicacy to both the perennial border and the hors d'oeuvres tray. *H.* 'Butterpat' is a pale yellow miniature-flowered daylily that blooms in early July and then reblooms in August provided you water plants in dry periods; the small, ruffled salmon-pink flowers of *H.* 'Decatur Pink Fairy' bloom profusely in the July mid-season. *H.* 'Countess Carrots', an aptly named bright orange miniature, has a long bloom season and high bud count as well as exceptionally good taste.

Daylily tasting has been the hit at the August Chardonnay Festival at Westport Rivers Vineyards in Westport, Massachusetts, for the past two years. Two of the favorite filling recipes that we served in small colorful daylily flowers were feta cheese and chopped black olives and a mixture of chopped seeded cucumbers, cream cheese and dill.

Use large-flowered daylilies for dessert. Place flowers in a wine goblet and fill with fresh fruit of a complementary color. Try peach-colored *H.* 'Ethel Shepherd' filled with blueberries and cream, or sherbet. Shredded daylily petals create a colorful confetti when added to cakes and breads. I have substituted the shredded zucchini in my zucchini bread recipe with bright colored daylily petals. The daylily bread has a novel color and tastes just as good as the original recipe.

The next time you are looking for some-





A daylily tasting at Tranquil Lake Nursery in Rehoboth, Massachusetts. Cathy Barash, author of *Edible Flowers from Garden to Palate*, offers stuffed daylilies and daylily blueberry pancakes to hundreds of people at the Nursery's 1995 July Open House. Since Tranquil Lake first presented the tastings in 1992, they've been regularly asked to serve stuffed daylilies at events all over southern New England and have been approached by restaurants and specialty food procurers to offer daylilies for these markets.

thing to do with a summer surplus of zucchinis — try combining them with daylilies in this delicious and easy cold soup. It's heavenly served warm too.

#### COLD ZUCCHINI AND DAYLILY SOUP (Warren Leach)

4 cups chicken stock  
(homemade or canned)  
4 cups grated zucchini  
fresh ground pepper  
3 ribs celery  
1 medium Vidalia onion  
3 sprigs fresh basil  
2-3 sprigs fresh cilantro  
1/4 cup lemon juice  
1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil  
a dozen small daylily blossoms (torn up)  
or a dozen baby lettuce leaves

Bring chicken stock to a boil. Add zucchini and turn off the heat. Let the mixture simmer a few minutes, then puree in the blender. Add fresh ground pepper to taste and set mixture aside. In the food processor, mince celery and onion, add to soup base. Mince basil and cilantro; add one cup of soup base and blend, return. Add lemon juice and extra virgin olive oil. Blend into soup. Chill. To serve, shred daylily blossoms and add to top of soup. (Serves 6-8)

#### Small Flowers for Stuffing

- Hemerocallis* 'Butterpat' —  
Miniature pale yellow, reblooms
- H. 'Countess Carrots' — Bright orange miniature with high bud count for long bloom
- H. 'Decatur Pink Fairy' — Salmon pink ruffled miniature
- H. 'Elfin Stella' — Tiny yellow flower with continuous rebloom
- H. 'Fairies Pinafore' — Early-blooming ruffled, lemon-yellow miniature
- H. 'Hot Stuff' — Early-blooming butter-yellow miniature with green throat, reblooms
- H. 'Patti Neyland' — Color resembles scoops of frosty peach sherbet
- H. 'Promises Promises' — Round ruffled clear pink miniature with great branching
- H. 'Siloam Little Girl' — Small rose-pink with rose eyezone, reblooms
- H. 'Stella d'Oro' — Bright yellow miniature blooms early and continues to frost

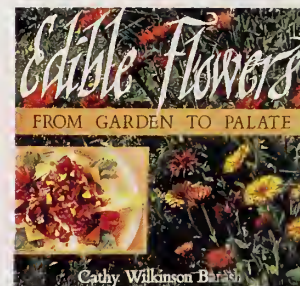


photo by Cathy Barash

Many other delicious daylily recipes can be found in Cathy Barash's *Edible Flowers from Garden to Palate*, Fulcrum Publishing, Golden, Colo., 1993\*, and Peter Gail's *The Delightful Delicious Daylily: Recipes and More*, Goosefoot Acres Press, Cleveland, Ohio (216-932-2145).

Daylilies make a colorful addition to the ornamental kitchen garden of vegetables and herbs. In our garden the tiny orange cups of H. 'Countess Carrots' are a smashing color combination with golden marjoram, the beet-red foliage of 'Dark Opal' basil, and the yellow umbels of bronze fennel. The next time you are foraging for something new for the perennial border, think of daylilies in a new way. Bon appetit.

\*Available on loan to members through the PHS Library.

Warren P. Leach is co-owner of Tranquil Lake Nursery in Rehoboth, Massachusetts, specializing in daylilies and Siberian and Japanese iris. Warren's interest in gardening overflows into the kitchen where he is a versatile cook. He vacations in Stone Harbor, New Jersey, where he serves daylilies to family members and friends.



Illustration is drawn  
four times larger  
than life size.

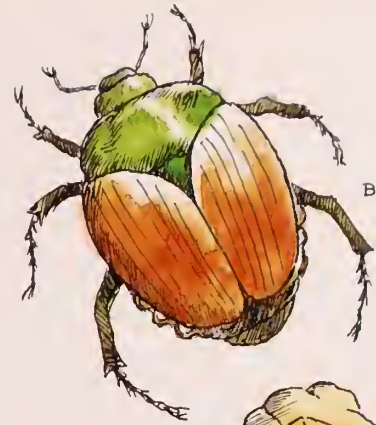
EGGS



GRUB



BEETLE



PUPA

# The Japanese Beetles are Coming and Milky Spore is Back to Challenge Them

by Elise Payne

The annual invasion is on. Here they come with their metallic green and copper wing covers, claw-like feet and voracious appetites. They leave lacy skeletons of chewed leaves, bruised petals of once-proud roses, remains of hollyhock sadly fluttering in the bright sun. They take their gourmand's pick of some 300 species in our gardens.

Forlorn is the garden where the Japanese beetle (*Popillia japonica*) has arrived.

With a different feeding habit, these colorful beetles could be considered attractive enough to rank in popularity with butterflies. Apart from good looks, however, the ubiquitous Japanese beetle has no other redeeming features. Slammin' Sammy Snead, the famous golfer, after playing a tournament in Virginia, huffed: "The beetles were so bad they'd fly right in your face when you tried to hit the ball." They're not welcome anywhere.

And to combat them, we should first understand how the chemical and biological controls such as milky spore and other naturally occurring controls work in the life cycle of the Japanese beetle.

## Stages of development

The Japanese beetle goes through a complete metamorphosis from egg through three stages (or instars) of larvae, then to pupae and finally to adulthood. By the time

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***Milky spore does not affect birds, bees, fish, other animals, plants or man. You could have it on your breakfast cereal . . . it's the safest material ever produced for insect control.***

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you see the beetles they probably have laid their eggs, which develop into larvae in a few weeks. These larvae or grubs are grayish white with a brown head, three-quarters to one inch long. They can be positively identified by a distinctive V-shaped row of spines on the underside of the last segment of the body.

## Invitations to feast

The grubs especially prefer the turf of the most beautiful lawns, with the succulent

healthy roots an open invitation to feast. If you can roll back the dead and dying grass like a carpet, you can be sure of grub damage.

The adults have an affinity for foliage of many sun-loving plants including fruit trees, shrubs, grapes, and flowering crab-apples. They also will feast on many flowers such as zinnias. Your vegetable garden may provide tasty treats of foliage of corn, asparagus, and even rhubarb.

## Source and spread of infestation

As indicated by the name, this is an imported pest. It's believed to have been brought in from Korea, not Japan, in a root ball of soil, probably before 1912 because after that imported plants had to be shipped bare-root. The beetle was first found in a nursery near Riverton, New Jersey. By 1918, 48 square miles were infested. From there the infestation has spread over most of the eastern part of the United States and is still spreading south and west, much to gardeners' dismay. Some airlines even spray their planes to try to stop the spread of this and other invasives.





photos supplied by St. Gabriel Laboratories Gainesville, Va

**Top:** Damaged turf rolled back shows a serious grub infestation. **Middle left:** The grub on the left is healthy; the grub on the right is infected with milky spore that has turned the blood a whitish color. **Bottom left:** A Japanese beetle horde devours a rose. **Bottom right:** Beetle larvae brought to St. Gabriel Laboratories for inoculation with milky spore serum. Each larvae is washed, anesthetized, inoculated and incubated to produce more serum.





Drawing of beetle is approximately double actual size

## Controls

So what to do? You could stock your own private flock of starlings as they are just about the only bird to eat Japanese beetles. Carbaryl (often sold as Sevin) is effective on the adults, but it's highly toxic to honey bees, fish, birds, butterfly caterpillars and earthworms. Diazinon, which may kill birds feeding on treated areas, and other chemicals are effective but these also create their own environmental concerns.

A pyrethrum mixture paralyzes the beetle on contact and even rotenone dust can be used. But these are merely stopgap measures. Next year you can be sure the beetles will return, probably in full force. There is a parasitic fly, *Hyperecteina aldrichi*, which attacks adult beetles, and a parasitic wasp, *Tiphia vernalis*, but these aren't prevalent enough to take control.

Perhaps you have seen some gardens sprouting bags on poles. These most likely are the pheromone, sex-scent attractant traps. Traps don't eliminate the pests but are most effective to determine the quantity of beetles in the area, not control them. The pheromone may attract the neighbor's beetles to your yard as well. Beetles have been known to have a range of five miles.

Floating row covers are possible, mainly in the vegetable garden in some situations, but probably are not the control of choice for your roses. Some gardeners have been known to use a hand-held vacuum cleaner on their plants in the morning, or to shake the sleepy beetles onto a cloth in the quest for ecologically sound control.

All of these techniques are labor-intensive, potentially expensive and ongoing.

When our sons were young we paid them a penny for each beetle they knocked into a plastic dish of soapy water. They had permission to scour the neighborhood for beetles, and learned to tread carefully in the pursuit. Not surprisingly, the combination of their diligence over a few years and the use of milky spore and the resulting disease has rendered our neighborhood virtually free of Japanese beetles.

## When to strike

The larval stage is the most vulnerable and the optimum time for attack. There are quite a few effective control options, some only temporary, some that offer results lasting as long as 20 years from one application. Some are toxic to a degree to the environment, while some are not toxic

at all.

Diazinon as well as other chemicals can be applied to kill grubs. Follow the manufacturer's directions. Moles, skunks, shrews and toads are some of the animals that find these grubs tasty morsels, but their feeding may damage the turf and the control obtained is minimal. Beneficial nematodes specific to Japanese beetles are another possibility and appear to have no negative environmental impact.

## Milky spore to the rescue

Fortunately milky spore (*Bacillus popilliae*-Dutky) is back in force. Milky spore and the resulting disease is the gardener's answer to Japanese beetles, and anathema to the grubs. It is "host specific" affecting Japanese beetle grubs and a few similar grubs. Nothing else is affected including earthworms.

Just after World War II Dr. Samson Dutky, a scientist working for the USDA, discovered that a common spore, after infecting the grub, provided biological control. Dutky's was a major contribution in pioneering the development of biological insect pathology in the United States. The process eventually was sold to private industry.

A few years ago the predominant milky spore production business was sold to a company that believed they could produce milky spore synthetically. This process did not work and led to a product recall, thus making it difficult to obtain.

Now St. Gabriel Laboratories—A Reuter Company, has reinstituted the original production techniques under Theodore Reuter's guidance; Reuter was originally in charge of the production from 1973 to 1983. Reuter went back to the USDA for samples of the original strong strain to resurrect this natural control, demonstrating a good case for saving original genetic material.

## How milky spore is produced

I found the production process quite fascinating. From newly plowed fields or turf farms, healthy Japanese beetle grubs are collected by hand. Once in the laboratory the grubs are anesthetized with carbon dioxide to protect from trauma, then they are individually injected with milky spore disease, with a special micro-injector. The larvae develop milky spore disease (evidenced by the milky appearance of their

once-clear blood) and become a mini bacteria factory producing up to three billion spores each. They then are freeze-dried (lyophilized), processed and packaged ready to be applied to the lawn and affected areas.

The beauty of this process is that once done it's effective for up to 20 years. The spores can be applied, following manufacturer's directions, any time of year the ground is not frozen. There they wait until the grubs develop and then they attack. The disease becomes self-sustaining as each affected grub dies and infects other surrounding grubs. Several years may be needed for maximum effectiveness, but it is non-toxic to the environment. According to Reuter, "Milky spore does not affect birds, bees, fish, other animals, plants or man. You could have it on your breakfast cereal . . . it's the safest material ever produced for insect control."

So on with the attack if you have these beetles. I'm on my way out to enjoy my garden and as my sundial inscription says:

Supreme she stands among the flowers  
And only marks life's sunny hours.

For her dull days do not exist —

The brazen-faced old optimist.

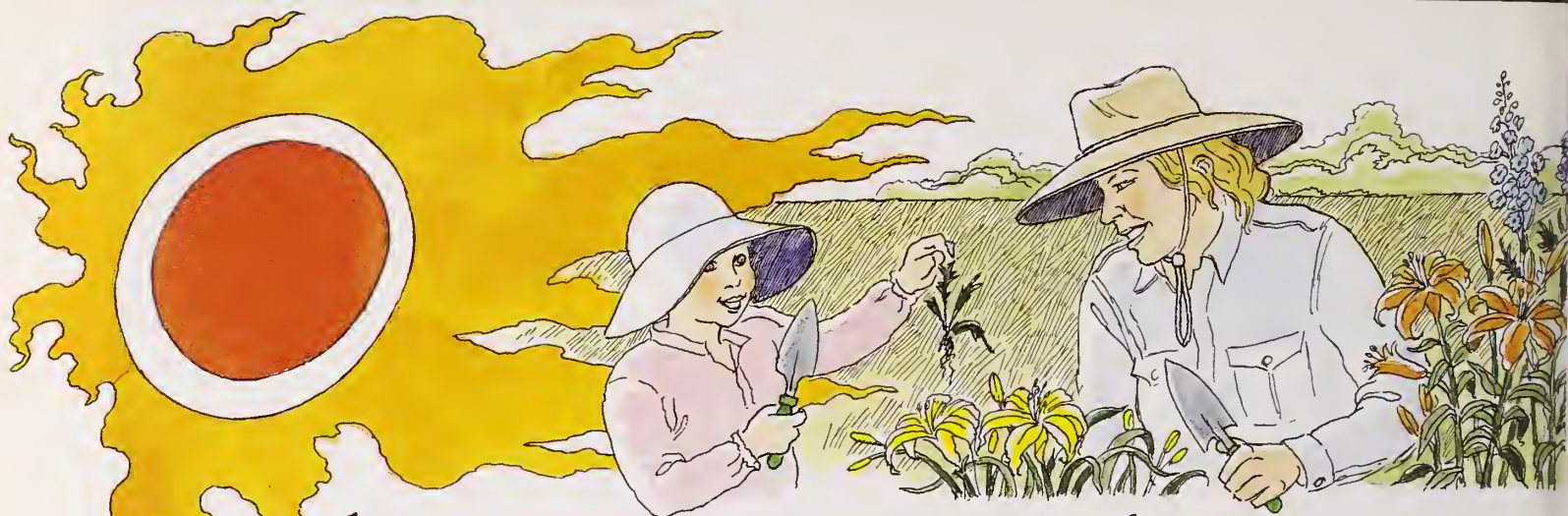
Now there is reason for optimism with the development of host-specific controls for undesirable insect species. *Popillia japonica*, consider yourself again biologically challenged.

## Where to Find Milky Spore

Milky spore is available in select garden centers or directly from producers e.g. St. Gabriel Laboratories, 14540 John Marshall Highway, Gainesville, VA 20155; 1-800-801-0061. You are invited to visit their science hall, which has a variety of hands-on exhibits for the family including the world's largest levitating globe. Milky spore is also produced by Fairfax Laboratories, Clinton Corners, New York; 914-266-3705.

Elise Payne is an occasional contributor to *Green Scene*; she lectures on a variety of garden subjects and is involved in the horticultural community.





# Weather Report: Sunshine

— *the Not So Good News. How to Protect Against Skin Cancer.*

by Richard L. Bitner, M.D.

When I want advice about something — most anything requiring a grasp of general principles and abundant common sense — I usually ask a gardening friend. Gardeners usually “know better” about things. There is one subject, however, that I’ve discovered gardeners seem to have a poor grasp of and display little common sense about. That subject is skin cancer and protection from its risk.

## ***Skin cancer is the most common cancer in both men and women***

The number of cases discovered each year has been increasing in the United States and many other countries for decades. Recently concerns about stratospheric ozone depletion (which permits higher levels of damaging ultraviolet radiation to reach the earth’s surface) have suggested that the incidence of these tumors will increase even more.

Skin cancer is not a single tumor with a single cause. There are three important types of skin cancer, each with specific characteristics, causes and natural history. Each of these forms arises from a different kind of cell. The two common skin cancers are basal cell and squamous cell carcinomas. A third, potentially fatal, form of skin cancer is melanoma.

The epidermis (outer layer of the skin) is mostly made up of flat, scale-like cells called *squamous cells*. Under the squamous cells are round cells called *basal cells*. The deepest part of the epidermis also contains *melanocytes*. These cells produce *melanin*, which gives the skin its color.

Most cases of basal cell and squamous cell carcinoma are caused by natural (the sun) or artificial sources of ultraviolet radiation. Prevention of these forms of skin cancer is possible. Both of these types of skin cancer tend to stay put, that is, they cause problems in the immediate area they are growing but do not spread (metastasize) to other areas of the body. The third type of skin cancer, melanoma, is the most serious tumor. Melanoma is the nasty form of skin cancer because it does spread readily to other parts of the body. Thus it is especially important that it be discovered and treated early before it spreads.

Many skin cancers are found and treated in offices and are never officially verified or reported but the American Cancer Society has estimated that in recent years more than 700,000 cases of skin cancer are diagnosed each year. Most of these are basal and squamous cell carcinomas and cause very few deaths. However, melanomas develop in 32,000 individuals per year and are responsible for almost 7,000 deaths. The incidence of melanoma has doubled each decade so that current estimates are that 1 in 100 newborns will develop this malignancy in his or her lifetime. This is double the risk of 20 years ago. The rapid rise of melanomas is alarming. Part of the statistical change is perhaps due to more accurate detection and reporting but almost everyone agrees that environmental factors are responsible as well.

Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer in the U.S. According to current estimates, 40 to 50 percent of Americans who live to age 65 will have skin cancer at least once.

Make no mistake: skin cancer is a major public health problem in the United States and gardeners are among those individuals at highest risk for this disease.

## ***What are the risk factors for skin cancer?***

Several factors increase the risk of developing skin cancer. Ultraviolet radiation from the sun is the main cause of skin cancer. Artificial ultraviolet radiation such as sunlamps and tanning booths can also cause skin cancer. It follows that the risk is

***Make no mistake: skin cancer is a major public health problem in the United States and gardeners are among those individuals at highest risk for this disease.***

affected by where a person lives. Skin cancer is more common in Texas than in Minnesota. Worldwide, the highest rate of skin cancer is found in South Africa and Australia because of the high amounts of ultraviolet radiation they receive. The risk is related to one’s lifetime exposure to the sun. Most skin cancers appear after age 50, but the damaging effects begin years earlier.

There are also some people with a **hereditary predisposition**. The dominant hereditary risk factor for skin cancer of all types is skin color. These tumors occur most often in fair-skinned folks, particularly those who freckle easily. People with red or blond hair and those born with blue or green eyes develop skin cancer more often.

Related to these factors is one’s skin reaction to strong sunlight. *People who say that they tan only and never burn when exposed to sunlight have lower rates of skin*





cancer than those who burn only and never tan. It should not be concluded, however, that a suntan is protection against skin cancer. The incidence of skin cancer in Australians who say that they tan only and never burn is nevertheless a third of the rate of those who say that they burn only and cannot tan.

#### Risk Factors for Developing Basal Skin Carcinoma and Squamous Cell Carcinoma of the Skin

- Prior sun-induced skin cancer
- Sun-induced skin cancer in a first-degree blood relative
- Sun-induced freckles
- Sun sensitivity
- Relative inability to tan after repeated exposure to ultraviolet radiation
- Excessive chronic exposure to ultraviolet radiation, occupational or recreational
- Sun-damaged skin
- Eye color blue or green, hair color red or blond, light skin

The nature of the exposure to sun necessary to develop skin cancer differs among the three types. The cumulative (lifetime) exposure to sunlight is associated with the risk of basal cell and squamous cell skin cancers. They tend to occur on the areas of the body more likely to be exposed to sunlight: the head and neck, arms and hands. There is also an increased frequency in outdoor workers (that means gardeners) compared with indoor workers, and the likelihood of developing them increases with age.

The patterns noticed with melanoma are not so simple. Sunlight is also considered a contributing factor. There is an increased risk for this tumor associated with a history of sunburns, particularly in childhood. There is also an increased risk for melanoma if one has already had the other kinds of skin cancer. However, melanoma occurs more frequently in indoor workers than in outdoor workers — and is therefore more common in upper socioeconomic groups — and does not tend to be found on those parts of the body with the most light exposure. Some researchers suggest that infrequent exposure to sunlight but of a nature to cause sunburn may be an important contributing element for melanoma rather than the long-standing, repeated

exposure to sunlight that predisposes people to the other types of skin cancers. There is data to suggest that the use of sun beds and tanning parlors can increase the risk of melanoma.

Others who are considered at higher risk for melanoma are those who get freckles with exposure to the sun; this tendency has been found to confer a threefold to fourfold increased risk. Additionally, anyone with a blood relative who was found to have a melanoma is at higher risk. *A change in a preexisting mole occurs as the presenting sign of a melanoma in almost all cases.*

*The problem with any public program is that the changes in incidence rates for skin cancers will only be evident in 40 years. One TV commentator in Australia called its beaches "every bit as dangerous as a war zone." That country has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world with two out of every three citizens developing some form of skin cancer in their lifetimes.*

*Currently the lifetime risk for an American to develop a malignant melanoma is 1 in 100. By 2000 it is estimated that the risk will be 1 in 75.*

Melanomas are nasty because of their tendency to spread to other parts of the body. At that point they are very difficult to treat successfully. Although it appears that these tumors are becoming more common they are not causing more deaths because more are being detected at a stage they can be treated. Survival from a melanoma is directly linked to the early detection and removal. Deaths from melanoma are related to a person's delay in seeking medical advice.

Unlike the other skin cancers, melanomas are more common in the 20 to 50 age group. They do not tend to occur where skin is exposed. They are most often seen on the upper back in both men and women and often on the back of legs in women. In African-Americans and Asians, melanomas tend to occur on the palms and soles, in the mouth and under the nails.

#### Skin cancer in African-Americans

Skin cancer is much less common in people with dark skin but still occurs. The incidence is around 4/100,000 compared

to 232/100,000 in whites. Most African-Americans who develop skin cancer are of lighter complexion. Blacks have a natural sun protection factor (SPF) of 13.4. (More about SPF later.) The causes in addition to sun exposure include albinism, burn scars, x-rays, and preexisting pigmented moles. There is a need for heightened awareness of the signs of skin cancer among African-Americans since they often have more advanced stages of the disease when diagnosed.

#### Recognizing skin cancer

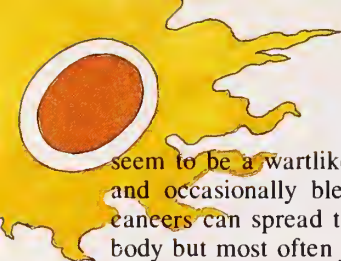
The most common is **basal cell carcinoma** (Figure 1). This usually appears as a small bump or nodule on the neck, scalp, hand or trunk. These can become open sores that ooze or form crusts. Sometimes it is a reddish patch or irritated area that can crust, itch, or hurt. Often these growths are smooth with a rolled border and an indentation in the center. Sometimes they are shiny bumps that appear pearly or translucent and can be pink, red or white. Others may appear as a scar-like area that is white, yellow or waxy with poorly defined borders. The skin might appear shiny and taut. Basal cell cancers do not enlarge quickly and rarely spread to other areas of the body. However they can cause considerable damage to the surrounding skin surfaces and result in disfigurement.



Fig. 1. Basal cell carcinoma.

**Squamous cell carcinoma** (Figure 2) usually appears as red, scaly patches on the face, mouth, and ears — areas on the body that already show signs of skin damage. The rim of the ear and the lower lip are very common sites. Look for a persistent, scaly red patch that has irregular borders and sometimes crusts or bleeds. Sometimes they appear as an elevated growth with a central depression that occasionally bleeds and can grow rapidly, other times they





seem to be a wartlike growth that crusts and occasionally bleeds. Squamous cell cancers can spread to other parts of the body but most often just cause local disfigurement.

photos by Asher B. Carey III



Fig. 2. Squamous cell carcinoma.

**Melanoma**-type skin cancer, on the other hand, can appear suddenly and is often deadly if not caught early (Figure 3). It often starts in or near a mole or other dark spot on the skin. Be familiar with your moles.

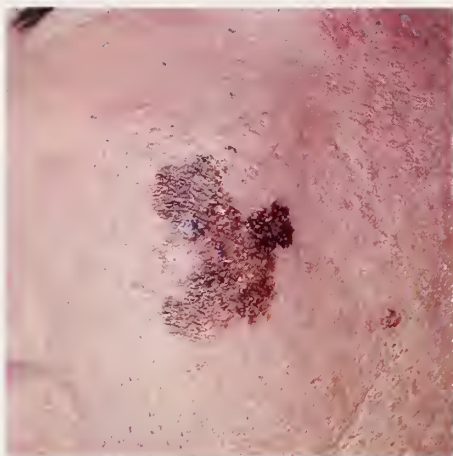


Fig. 3. Melanoma.

### Detection of skin cancer

Most skin cancers are self-discovered or noticed by friends and relatives. *A regular habit of self-examination is essential for every gardener.* In one study, 53% of cases were found by the patient, 17% by family members, and only 25% by physicians. The reason so few are found during physician examinations is that skin cancer has a low priority in primary care and skin cancer screening is not included in the preventive-medicine policies of many health insurance

### Moles that could be melanomas:

- A new mole, pigmented (colored) or nonpigmented (2% of melanomas have no color)
- A preexisting mole that has changed color (darkening or lightening)
- A preexisting mole that has changed surface (elevation, erosion, crusting, oozing, or scaling)
- A preexisting mole that has changed its margins/borders (expansion, extension, notching)
- An unusual, prominent, or "ugly" mole that stands out from all the rest

### The ABCD's of Melanoma from the Skin Cancer Foundation\*

#### Asymmetry

Most early melanomas are asymmetrical: a line through the middle of it would not create matching halves. Common moles are round.

#### Border

The borders of early melanomas are often uneven and may have scalloped or notched edges. Common moles have smoother, more even borders.

#### Color

Common moles usually are a single shade of brown. Varied shades of brown, tan or black are often the first signs of melanoma. As melanomas progress, the colors red, white, and blue may appear.

#### Diameter

Early-stage melanomas tend to grow larger than the common moles — generally to at least the size of a pencil eraser (about 6mm or 1/4 inch in diameter)

(\*Author's note: Make no mistake, there is no absolute requirement for tumor asymmetry, border irregularity, nonuniform color, or tumor diameter greater than 6mm, as commonly outlined in these educational materials. Melanomas can be round or oval, uniformly black and even occasionally pink moles, and can be smaller than a pencil eraser.)

providers or corporations. Time appears better spent on discussing the problems of cigarette addiction, improper diet and lack of exercise and a physical examination

focused on the heart and lungs. Even the most conscientious primary physician will detect an early, curable melanoma only once or twice in ten years. The fact remains that melanoma skin cancer is estimated to be the seventh most frequent cancer in whites in the United States. It is more common than ovarian, cervical and central nervous system cancers and leukemia.

Gardeners must conduct a self-examination or insist that their primary physician (or better yet, a dermatologist) examine their total body surface.

### Treatment of skin cancers

Treatment of skin cancers is determined by the dermatologist or plastic surgeon consulted and depends on the cell type, its location and extent. Most cases of squamous cell and basal cell skin cancer can be treated successfully in an outpatient setting with a minimum of discomfort, cost and inconvenience. Melanomas need to be completely excised and the microscopic appearance studied to determine further treatment. Confronted with skin cancer is not the time to apply herbal remedies.

### Prevention of skin cancer: Getting "Sun Smart"

Exposure to the sun is the major risk factor that gardeners have control over since we can't change any hereditary predisposition we might have.

We must educate ourselves and our children about the dangers of sun overexposure and develop the habits necessary to protect ourselves. Most adults and teenagers will be resistant to these changes. There is a need to educate children at an early age. Several countries, notably Scotland and Australia have had public education programs underway for a number of years.

The problem with any public program is that the changes in incidence rates for skin cancers will only be evident in 40 years. One TV commentator in Australia called its beaches "every bit as dangerous as a war zone." That country has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world with two out of every three citizens developing some form of skin cancer in their lifetimes. But their rates are beginning to decline, and we can learn much from one of their most successful educational campaigns. An animated character named Sid Seagull advises (on posters, bumper stickers, announcements, etc.): *Slip! Slop! Slap!* any time you head outdoors, *slip* on a shirt, *slop* on some sunscreen, and *slap* on a hat. Sid also advises "Between eleven and three, slip under a tree." Australia also reportedly has a nationwide policy in which munici-



palities are encouraged to plant shade trees and build roofed structures in parks and gardens and near swimming pools and schools. Communities are encouraged to schedule functions before 11am and after 3pm. The program also includes skin cancer screening tents situated at local beaches. In a survey taken in Australia several years ago less than half of those polled considered suntans desirable showing that the public

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*Sadly, there does not seem to be any widespread educational efforts directed at the importance of protecting children. Although older age is the time of onset of these skin cancers, it is exposure in childhood to the major environmental risk factor of sunlight that is critical in determining risk at later ages.*

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education efforts have had a dramatic effect. It has actually become fashionable to protect your skin.

In our country a survey taken by the Skin Cancer Foundation showed that more than two-thirds of the respondents said they look and feel healthier with a suntan. It is sad that even members of the public that are knowledgeable about the sun's dangers seem unlikely to practice prevention because of social norms. Canada holds an annual "Sun Awareness Week" each year to increase awareness of the dangers of ultraviolet overexposure and to disseminate information about prevention and early detection of skin cancers. It includes posters on public transportation and radio announcements. There is also a primary school education program "Living with Sunshine."

Although researchers have not yet determined the optimal age to begin teaching children about skin cancer prevention and the most effective teaching method, there is a need to educate children at an early age. Up to 70% of adolescents have never used a sunscreen. Children who receive formal skin cancer prevention education in elementary school have demonstrated more favorable attitudes toward sun protection. In another study 200 mothers admitted that 38% of the children had been sunburned at least once during the prior year and some as often as five times.

Any clothing gives some degree of protection; some fabrics are better at blocking out the ultraviolet rays than others. Of course shirts with high collars and long sleeves are best. I was surprised to learn that a single layer of a t-shirt does not

protect very well. An average cotton shirt offers a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of only 6 to 9. This drops to an SPF of only 3 if the shirt gets wet. Dark cloth absorbs more ultraviolet light and protects the skin better.

The latest tactic for providing sun protection is specially made clothing. It is made with tightly woven fabrics that physically block most of the sun's harmful rays. Sun Precautions, Inc., of Everett, Washington, make a line of SPF 30+ clothing called Solumbra and has received FDA clearance to market their clothing for sun protection. The protection is built into the fabric, rather than a coating that can wear off. They claim their garments are soft, lightweight and well-ventilated. The president and founder of the firm suffered a melanoma and subsequently developed the line of clothing. Their mail-order catalog (800-882-7860) includes hats, gloves, shirts, jackets, pants and skirts for adults and, of special note, many colorful items for toddlers and children. The clothing is rather expensive but is said to consistently block over 97% of ultraviolet rays and maintains this protection even when wet (typical clothes and an SPF 30 sunscreen do not come close to this). It is said to dry quickly and is protective even after 100 launderings.

Select and apply a sunscreen that is water resistant with an SPF of 15 or more

#### Sun Safety Guides from the American Academy of Dermatology

Stay in the shade from 10am to 4pm

Wear protective, tightly woven clothing with long sleeves

Wear a broad-brimmed hat and sunglasses

Apply a sunscreen with a SPF of at least 15. Reapply every two hours and use liberally

Remember that clouds block only about 20% of ultraviolet radiation

Be aware of reflective surfaces that can reflect up to 85% of the sun's damaging rays

Protect children. Get them used to wearing sunscreen so that it becomes as much a habit as brushing teeth or washing hands

Author's note:

Avoid suntanning parlors

Be aware that certain medications increase sun sensitivity; your pharmacist should have labeled them.

before going outside (SPF ranges from 2-30, the higher the number the greater the protection). Apply the sunscreen 20 minutes before going outside. The time allows the active ingredients to sink into the skin. *Reapply frequently and liberally.* It is astounding that gardeners will drop \$20 for a new *Heuchera* but are stingy with sunscreen. Pick a comfortable, wide-brimmed hat for the best protection and wear it while outside. It has been estimated that regular use of SPF-15 sunscreens to the face, ears, neck, and upper extremities during the first 18 years of life could lead to a 78% reduction in lifetime incidence of basal cell and squamous cell carcinomas since nine out of 10 of these cancers occur in these sites. Wear sunglasses also. Chronic sun exposure is directly related to the onset of cataracts and is responsible for a sizable proportion of the more than one million cataracts operated on yearly in the United States according to a report in the 1995 *Skin Cancer Foundation Journal*. Chronic sun exposure is also linked to melanomas of the eyelids, as well as macular degeneration, a leading cause of blindness. The Skin Cancer Foundation recommends selecting protective sunglasses with wraparound frames that block at least 99% of the ultraviolet rays. Read the labels.

This is not a cheerful topic. I would much rather write about *Daphne caucasica*. But there is much for PHS gardeners and activists to think about. More than one million people will be diagnosed with skin cancer in the United States in 1997. In the 1930s the risk of developing melanoma was one in 1,500. By 1980 it was one in 250. Experts estimate that if melanoma continues rising at its present rate, the chance of developing the potentially deadly form of skin cancer will be one in 75 by the year 2000. There is concern that the thinning stratospheric ozone may permit more damaging short wavelength ultraviolet radiation to reach the earth's surface and aggravate the problem of skin cancers further. (Read *The End of Nature* by Bill McKibben, Random House, 1989, ISBN 0-394-57601-2; it might be the most important book you've read this decade.)

We gardeners are learning about the hazards of the sunshine that makes our gardens bloom, and behavior always tends to lag behind knowledge. It has taken over 30 years to convince a majority of the dangers of cigarette smoking. We continue to display risky behaviors regarding sun exposure. Society is spending more time outdoors for recreation if not for occupation, is more mobile, and is aging. Unfortunately, many people are using sunscreens only to avoid sunburn and therefore



## How To Do a Skin Self-Exam

**Y**ou can improve your chances of finding skin cancer promptly by performing a simple skin self-exam regularly.

The best time to do this self-exam is after a shower or bath. You should check your skin in a well-lighted room using a full-length mirror and a hand-held mirror. It's best to begin by learning where your birthmarks, moles, and blemishes are and what they usually look like. Check for anything new — a change in the size, texture, or color of a mole, or a sore that does not heal.

Check *all* areas, including the back, the scalp, between the buttocks, and the genital area.

**1.** Look at the front and back of your body in the mirror, then raise your arms and look at the left and right sides.

**2.** Bend your elbows and look carefully at the palms, the forearms, including the undersides, and the upper arms.

**3.** Examine the back and front of the legs. Also look between the buttocks and around the genital area.



**4.** Sit and closely examine the feet, including the soles and the spaces between the toes.

**5.** Look at your face, neck, and scalp. You may want to use a comb or a blow dryer to move hair so that you can see better.



By checking your skin regularly, you will become familiar with what is normal. If you find anything unusual, see your doctor right away. Remember, the earlier skin cancer is found, the better the chance for cure.

prolong their time in the sun. And, sadly, there does not seem to be any widespread educational efforts directed at the importance of protecting children. Although older age is the time of onset of these skin cancers, it is exposure in childhood to the major environmental risk factor of sunlight that is critical in determining risk at later ages. This is the case for all three kinds of skin cancer. Children have more sun exposure because they have more leisure time and wear less clothes than adults. Protection and education should start in childhood so that for all of us, adults and children, applying a sunscreen and wearing a hat when outside becomes as habitual as brushing our teeth.

Richard L. Bitner earned his M.D. from the University of Pennsylvania and is a board-certified anesthesiologist. He has studied horticulture at Longwood Gardens, where he is a teaching assistant.

## Resources

Information about skin cancer is available from the sources listed below.

### Cancer Information Service 1-800-4-CANCER

A program of the National Cancer Institute. The staff can answer questions in English or Spanish and can send free National Cancer Institute booklets about cancer. They also know about local resources and services.

### American Cancer Society 1-800-ACS-2345

Many services and activities in local areas for patients and their families.

### Skin Cancer Foundation Suite 2402 245 Fifth Avenue New York, NY 10016 212-725-5176

This nonprofit organization provides publications and audiovisual materials on the prevention, early detection, and treatment of skin cancer. The Foundation also publishes *Sun and Skin News* and *The Skin Cancer Foundation*

*Journal*, which have non-technical articles on skin cancer. Send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to receive free printed information.

### American Academy of Dermatology P.O. Box 3116 Evanston, IL 60204 708-869-3954

An organization of doctors who specialize in diagnosing and treating skin problems. It provides free booklets on skin cancer and can refer people to dermatologists in their local area.

### American Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons 444 East Algonquin Road Arlington Heights, IL 60005 1-800-635-0635

This Society sends free information about various surgical procedures. It can also provide the names of board-certified plastic surgeons in a patient's area.

Much of the information for this article was obtained from the following medical journal available in many hospital libraries: National Conference on Skin Cancers Supplement to *Cancer*, A journal of the American Cancer Society, 75:2, January 15, 1995, ISSN 0008-543X CANCAR



# On The Wild Side: a private city garden

 by Michael J. LoFurno

photos by Michael J. LoFurno



A minimalist grape arbor frames the dining area in this rescued city garden. From the table, the view includes a tiny foreground of lawn, a middleground of native perennials, and a background of native shrubs and trees.



Before development, the "garden" consisted of three neglected and abandoned lots; one was the site of a demolished rowhouse.

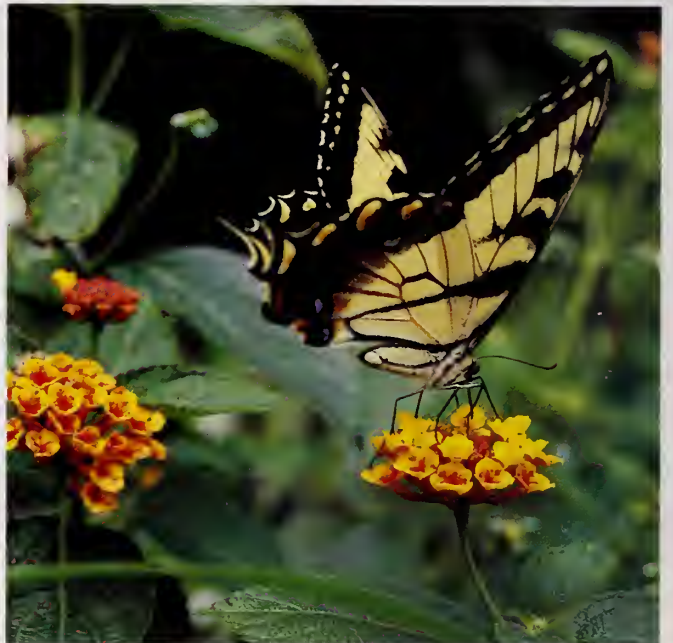
**“I have a gun,” she said, “just in case.”**

The tinned windows rumbled in the wind and the only light was from a small flashlight. Her fear did little to sway my youthful confidence as we explored the house that had sat vacant for 10 years. It was a shell of a house: no plumbing, electricity, or windows. The yard was filled with debris and weeds, but it was big. And it faced south. Both the house and the yard had “potential” written all over them, and there had been no takers. I told the sales agent I would “think about it.” Nonetheless, my mind was made up.

My friend Stephen had already bought the adjoining house in southwest Center City, and we were in the process of renovating it. The notion of combining our yards into a larger outdoor space was appealing. The sales agent didn’t know that, so I tried to seem only mildly interested. We eventually negotiated an agreement, and I sought financing to buy what would become my home.

In the meantime, we learned that the vacant lot on the other side was owned by the City and could be obtained by an adjoining owner if that owner agreed to fix it up. Before I made settlement, we met with that owner, a man who had lived in the house for most of his 84 years. He was determined to see the neighborhood come back to stability, but did not have the wherewithal to see it through himself. We





**Left:** Serpentine beds and trails were formed with bricks and rubble unearthed from the vacant lot where a three-story brick house once stood. **Top right:** Flowering plants fill the beds adding color, form, and texture. Spring flowers include celandine (*Chelidonium majus*) and fragrant *Tulipa* 'General de Wet'. **Bottom right:** The male tiger swallowtail visits the potted bronze lantana on the patio.

agreed to do the work necessary to establish a garden and obtain the lot for him from the City. He agreed to turn the lot over to us for one dollar in exchange for the improvements. We set to work immediately.

The lot had been the spot where people parked their cars to change the oil. It was where dead pets in trash bags were thrown for posterity. It was the place where scrapers dumped broken bicycles, television, shopping carts, bottles and cans and jars. The broken glass was so plentiful that we filled a dozen tubs with it. It was so deep that Stephen wondered aloud if glass had been used as a sort of mulch. Our first task, of course, was to build a fence to keep out even more trash.

### **Walls and fences**

Eventually, I acquired the house in be-

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***After removing as much surface debris as possible, we set to work on the underground debris. The city had demolished the house that once stood on the lot and plowed it into the ground.***

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tween Stephen's and the lot. We then set ourselves to building what we believed would be "the biggest private garden in Center City." We didn't have much money, but we had time and enthusiasm. After removing as much *surface* debris as possible, we set to work on the *underground* debris. The city had demolished the house that once stood on the lot and plowed it into the ground. Stephen unearthed all the bricks that were once the three-story front and rear facades while I began to shape them

into serpentine raised beds. We mixed city compost with the "native soil"; to prevent frost-heaving of the drylaid brick walls we insulated the soil with a layer of broken brick and stone. A Flemish bond ensured stability while giving me a chance to use both whole bricks and broken ones.

Our first plantings were meager and many were considered "experimental." We had no idea that the soil mix we created would be so fertile! Everything we planted did well — the 10 hemlocks we bought through a newspaper ad, "you dig 'em — \$3 each"; the burning bush that I rescued from a dumpster; the everbearing raspberries that I had moved from my grandmother's to my parents' to my last apartment now had a permanent home. Slowly, the garden took shape. Soon it was apparent that we had to spend a few more bucks to get things



to the next level. It also became apparent that we had to be more selective when accepting "gifts" of plants.

We replaced the wire fence with a brick wall that I designed to complement the adjacent architecture. A heavy iron gate (salvaged from a mausoleum by a German-town junk dealer) formed the main entrance.

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*Sure, we grow culinary herbs, some vegetables, and a number of fruit crops. Our primary reason for growing, however, is not to take care of ourselves, but rather, our wild friends. . . . The sight of the scarlet tanager, golden-crowned kinglet, American redstart, and magnolia warbler during last fall's migration seemed to make all our efforts worthwhile.*

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### **An urban oasis**

I set out to create a natural habitat, an urban oasis filled with plants — and animals — native to the area. We downplayed the Eurasian species and focused on natives that are good for wildlife — northern bayberry, sweetbay magnolia, arrowwood, withe-rod, celandine poppy, woodfern, wild ginger, and bloodroot. I rescued a sassafras from a development site, together with virginia bluebells and slender toothwort. Sure, we grow culinary herbs, some vegetables, and a number of fruit crops. Our primary reason for growing, however, is not to take care of ourselves, but rather, our wild friends.

I also set out to make this place seem larger than it really is by establishing a series of passages and rooms to define it. A meandering path leads past aromatic shrubs and herbs and our collection of wayside plants. A modern no-frills pergola overhead divides one small lawn from another, while the paving textures underfoot differentiate the activity areas. Brick gives way to wood chips as one trail enters the woodland garden where the shade of hemlocks protects an expanding carpet of foamflower.

The transition from a vacant urban lot strewn with bottles, auto parts, and decomposing bags of garbage to a verdant oasis that attracts birds and butterflies has been nothing short of incredible. In the center of the city we have created a rich and viable environment.

### **A four-season garden**

The springtime air is filled with the melodies of songbirds. In addition to the more common urban residents, such as

### **Birds**

Birds need three things to declare a habitat their own: food, shelter and water. Bird feeders in winter help satisfy the requirement of **food**, but do not address the needs of insectivorous birds nor the needs of fruiteaters and seed-eaters throughout the year. Planting perennial herbs, shrubs and trees that provide food to these birds, has helped us to attract an impressive variety to the garden year-round. For the insect-eaters, our primary contribution is one of omission. We refrain as much as possible from the use of insecticides or pesticides and rely, instead, on the bird population to glean insects from the leaves and flowers of our herbs, vegetables, and woody plants.

We grow slipskin grapes (*Vitis spp.*); these tend to ripen one at a time, not the whole cluster at once, making a clean harvest difficult. Like the gooseberries and currants, our grapes are often enjoyed by the birds (or the wasps) before we get to harvest them all. Probably our most important wildlife food plant is the black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), a volunteer in our garden. This fast-grower is especially favored by brown thrasher, wood thrush, and, unfortunately, European starling.

The need for **shelter** is satisfied by the hemlocks (*Tsuga canadensis*) that provide a leafy cover year-round and the arrowwood (*Viburnum dentatum*) that has held nests of northern cardinals. The climbing vines of virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) and boston ivy (*P. tricuspidata*) carpet the garden walls and provide cover for several dozen house and purple finches. The walls are alive with the chatter of these and other birds year-round.

The third requirement, **water**, is satisfied by our bird bath. Cleaned regularly and refilled daily, this feature is the focal gathering spot for drinking and washing. You can readily imagine how welcome a respite this can be on the hottest August afternoon or the coldest January morning when clean fresh water for birds, rare in central Philadelphia, is provided.

### **Butterflies**

A successful butterfly garden requires three elements: host plants, nectar sources, and water. The needs of butterflies are similar to those of birds, but

their foods much include both "host plants" where they lay their eggs and where the larva feed and chrysalize, and "nectar plants," which the adults visit to sip their food.

Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*) serves as an excellent host for the eastern black swallowtail to lay its eggs and for the larva to feed. Potted *Lantana* provide nectar for the adults, while the inconspicuous pellitory (*Parietaria pensylvanica*), an urticaceous (nettle family) plant, serves as host to the red admiral. A rotting pear placed on the table provides valuable nutrients to the question mark. Water puddles in fallen leaves and brick paving moist with dew are visited by various thirsty butterflies. Once again, our "no spray" policy pays off by protecting the *Lepidoptera* from harm.

In our garden, we have documented 13 species of skippers and butterflies. We have reared both Eastern black swallowtails and monarchs from eggs or larva found in the garden.

### **First Place Winner in Combination Vegetable/Flower Gardens**

"Amazing! What a wonderful experience it is to enter the garden gate and be introduced to an ever-changing and varied world of horticulture. This garden is a visual delight. There is always something around the corner 'no matter what the season.' A combined effort of next door neighbors, this 'double oasis,' consisting mostly of native vegetables and flowers has paths, patios, and containers to captivate the visitor. To think there is a garden like this in the city planted to attract birds, butterflies, and hummingbirds is great. To have your grandmother's raspberry bush is a wonder. Viewing this garden was a delightful way to start our day."

Keep up the good work! We encourage your continued participation in the City Gardens Contest.

Judges comments for the  
1995 City Gardens Contest





Sun-loving perennials such as globe thistle (*Echinops ritro*), three-lobed coneflower (*Rudbeckia triloba*), and purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*) envelop the patio where potted cypress vine (*Ipomoea quamoclit*), succulents, and *Lantana* spp. are located.



### Participate in The City Gardens Contest

Contestants learn about the City Gardens Contest at the Flower Show, from a city-wide mailing, from a poster or a neighbor, or by seeing a notice on the bulletin board where they work.

Two rounds of judging — one in July and one in August — are necessary to weed out problems such as the potential gardener who entered the Contest with heady aspirations in the lushness of spring, but never got around to planting the garden.

On their initial visit, judges look at each garden on its own merit, not pitting one against each other. They rank such elements as variety of plants, suitability of plants to their location, horticultural practices, maintenance, color, use of space, imaginative ideas, and design and total visual effect. In August, a second judging team is dispatched to each of 10 to 20 gardens in each category, and this time each garden is weighed against its class competitors. And from this judging, winners are chosen to receive awards in a late fall ceremony.

To participate in the City Gardens Contest, as a contestant, as a judge, or both, write:

**Flossie Narducci**  
The Pennsylvania  
Horticultural Society  
100 North 20th Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19103-1495  
Fax: 215-988-8810

finches, sparrows, robins, and mourning doves, we have been visited during migration by tanagers, orioles, thrushes and various warblers. An abundant supply of worms and caterpillars helps to keep our avian visitors happy.

In summer, the garden is visited by more than 10 species of butterfly, including the question mark, red admiral, and the tiger and eastern black swallowtails. We are hopeful that the right combination of plants will someday attract the spicebush and pipevine swallowtails as well. The activity continues well into the night, with the repetitive chorus of the mockingbird and the bizz-buzz of the nighthawk zigzagging in the sky overhead.

The fleshy fruits of the flowering dogwood and the sun-ripened grapes don't last long; they are quickly devoured by songbirds. The sight of the scarlet tanager, golden-crowned kinglet, American redstart, and magnolia warbler during last fall's migration seemed to make all our efforts worthwhile. We don't mind the mushrooms that grow in the lawn and in the mulch. In fact, we collect spores and distribute them to establish musky fall fungi to help complete the cycle of life in the garden.

According to records, the northern oriole should not be in our Philadelphia garden in late December, but there she is, happily pecking at the suet feeder. Many folks in

our neighborhood have never seen a downy woodpecker, but we've got two taking turns with the oriole at the feeder.

#### How did it happen?

Did it all happen naturally? Well, yes and no. We did purchase ladybugs and praying mantids to get things going. The graceful and voracious mantids continue to inhabit the garden from year to year and help keep the garden free of the more "detrimental" insects. We imported compost from the city's Recycling Center that was rich with earthworms and they have thrived despite the appetites of robin and thrasher.

By selecting the right plants to attract, feed, and protect wildlife, we have created a garden that is brimming with life. By restricting our maintenance to hand-mowing and hand-pruning, and by restricting "pest" control to natural means, we have virtually eliminated the possibility of polluting our small environment. By our hard work and attentiveness to the needs of both plants and animals, we have created a veritable oasis in the urban environment.

Michael LoFurno is a registered landscape architect. The garden that he and Stephen Maciejewski built and maintain has garnered a First Prize three times in the annual City Gardens Contest.





# ARE YOU FOR REAL?

*What makes a real gardener?*



by Art Wolk

We're constantly deluged with lists that declare which of us are "real" men or "real" women. These lists don't make much sense for gardeners, because we all know that the act of gardening is gender-neutral, and that the stereotypes have disappeared. A trip to the home of many gardeners and to their garden clubs reveals that many men do delicate flower arranging and that many women comfortably work with heavy garden equipment. These shifts in stereotypes are all to the good. But they beg the question of what a "real" gardener happens to be. After giving it some thought, I've come up with a list of 25 descriptions with which most *Green Scene* readers will probably identify.

1. Real gardeners spend more money on plants than on their clothes, and they look it!
2. Real gardeners have a home library with one Bible, one cookbook, one dictionary, one novel, one biography, and 200 books on how to plant a bean seed.
3. Real gardeners find it impossible to throw away an invitation to join their 20th plant society.
4. Real gardeners buy at least 10,000 plants in the course of a lifetime without having the vaguest notion of where they'll put any one of them.
5. Real gardeners don't care what anyone thinks when they steal their neighbor's bags of grass clippings from the trash for mulch.
6. Real gardeners let their world come to a grinding halt whenever a total stranger asks to see their garden.
7. Real gardeners always sow 10 times more seeds than are needed and then try to find a home for every single seedling.
8. Real gardeners never quite get completely clean.
9. Real gardeners don't think there's anything cute and fuzzy about rabbits, groundhogs, raccoons or deer.
10. Real gardeners think that anyone who buys tomatoes from a supermarket in the summer should be committed.
11. Real gardeners break the land speed record to get their fresh-picked corn into boiling water.
12. Real gardeners have soil under their nails from every garden they've ever planted (see #8, above).
13. Real gardeners have one hammer, one saw, one screwdriver, and 17 different shovels.
14. Real gardeners always hope they haven't won their last blue ribbon.
15. Real gardeners are surrounded by neighbors who think they're crazy. (But gardeners know the non-gardeners are really the crazy ones!)

*continued*



## ARE YOU FOR REAL?

16. Real gardeners become psychotic before every flower show competition, driving themselves and everyone around them to the brink of insanity. Then they're ready to go through the same thing again if they win just one blue ribbon.
17. Real gardeners know a garden is never perfect because there's always at least 30 more things that need to be done.
18. Real gardeners are like Thomas Jefferson, who, when he found that his garden was too big to handle, tripled its size the following year.
19. Real gardeners go to public and private gardens with a notebook, so they can drive their families insane while they take half a day to write down the name of every intriguing plant they see.
20. Real gardeners don't look up to presidents, prime ministers, or sports heroes. The object of their adulation is the author of the most expensive garden book at their local bookstore.
21. Real gardeners are so cheap that they save seeds for at least 10 years, but are such spendthrifts that they shell out thousands over the course of a lifetime for garden gadgets that break after 10 minutes of use.
22. Real gardeners think that all of God's creatures deserve a place in the universe, except, of course, if the creatures happen to be plant eaters living in the universe of the gardener's backyard.
23. Real gardeners, during their lifetime, kill 10,000 plants that would have survived perfectly well without any "assistance."
24. Real gardeners know that their garden changes sizes during the course of a year. When they order seeds and plants in the winter, their garden is the size of a football field. At planting time in the spring, their garden is the size of a postage stamp. When it's 100°F outside in August, the garden is the size of three football fields. And in the fall, when it's time to clean up, the garden doesn't exist at all!
25. Real gardeners know they're going to live forever. Why else would a 90-year-old gardener plant two oak tree seedlings and then look through a catalog for a hammock?

### Let's Hear From You

Anything else? Has Art Wolk said it all or do you want to add any other ideas for our readers about "real" gardeners. Send your pithy opinion to Editor, *Green Scene*, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, 100 N. 20th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103-1495.



Art Wolk, a two-time winner of the Philadelphia Flower Show Grand Sweepstakes, writes and lectures on a variety of garden topics. His family and friends all think he's a bit too much of a real gardener.

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# Lyme Disease Revisited

## Maximizing protection for the gardener



by H. Ralph Schumacher, Jr., M.D.

Nancy Bosold, Penn State extension agent for Montgomery County, wrote an excellent article about Lyme disease for the May, 1991, issue of *Green Scene*\*. Unfortunately, the deer tick that carries the disease continues to be present in our region's gardens and woodlands and our problems with the disease persist.

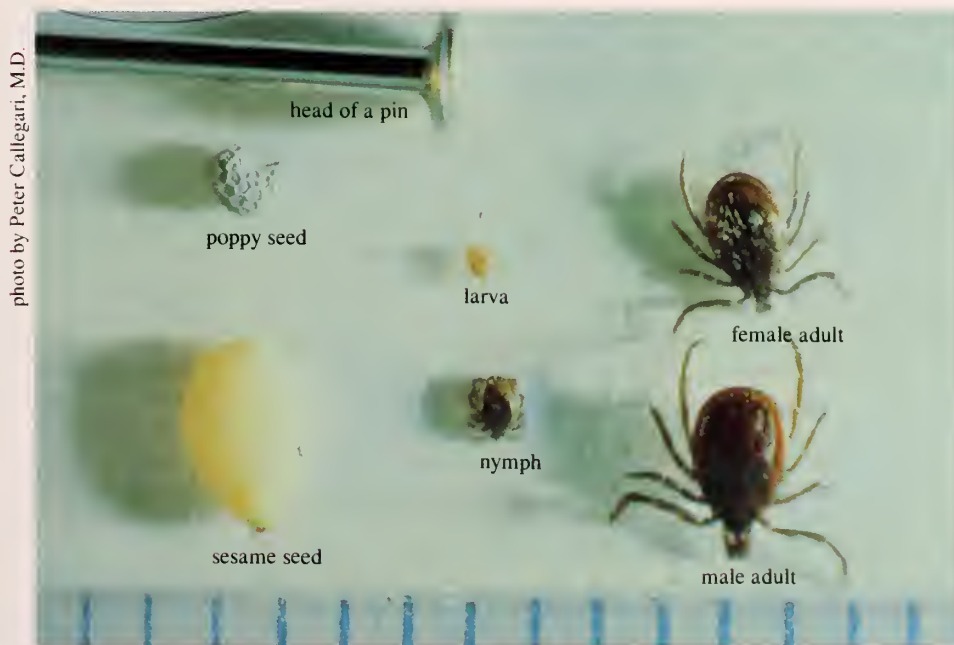
Prevention remains the best defense against Lyme disease. Every gardener should be aware of the early signs of Lyme disease since that is when treatment is most effective. While testing to confirm the disease has improved in recent years and proper treatment has become more standardized, we still encounter problems with over- and under-diagnosis and the resultant treatment conflicts.

\*For a copy of Nancy Bosold's article "Damn Ixodes Dammini" about Lyme disease and the deer tick carrier, send \$1.00 and a self-addressed envelope with 64 cents postage to *Green Scene* (DT), PHS, 100 N. 20th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103-1495.

It's worth reviewing here the symptoms and the preventive measures we can take.

### Symptoms

Lyme disease is caused by a spirochete transmitted through infected deer tick bites. Primary symptoms develop from three to 30 days after the bite. The symptoms are varied and often confused with those of other illnesses. Most characteristic is a circular red rash around the site of the tick bite, accompanied by aches, fever, or fatigue. Unfortunately, some Lyme disease sufferers never develop the rash, no early treatment is given, and the disease progresses. Diagnosed early, Lyme disease is easy to treat. Unchecked, the first symptoms gradually disappear, only to be replaced in some people months or years later by arthritic, neurological, or cardiac complications. Severe pain in the joints, confusion, memory loss, and irregular heartbeat are just some of the potential problems. Treatment is more difficult as the disease progresses. (See Sidebar.)



Deer tick: carrier of the bacteria (*Borrelia burgdorferi*) that causes Lyme disease.



# Lyme Disease Revisited

## Diagnostic Snafu

Jane MacDowell, an avid area gardener, talked with me about her problems with Lyme disease. She and her husband Bill do inspect for deer ticks and have found at least four on her with at least two followed by the typical expanding red rash. Each time the rash occurred she was given antibiotics, but each time for only one week at most. About two years after the last rash she began developing fever, weight loss, fatigue and most dramatically, excruciating pains shooting across her back at chest level.

A variety of tests and treatments gave no answer or relief. Although a Lyme test was positive, her physician assumed the test reflected antibodies developed from the infection two years earlier. Hence she was treated for another diagnosis. When symptoms intensified, her physician recommended a spinal tap, which showed a positive test for Lyme disease in the spinal fluid. Armed with this definitive answer, an intravenous antibiotic (ceftriaxone) was administered over a four-week period. Symptoms resolved and Jane MacDowell is now doing well. She was initially undertreated because a new episode of Lyme disease was not considered the source of her problem; however, with the final diagnosis, she responded well to appropriate treatment.



photo courtesy of Pfizer Central Research

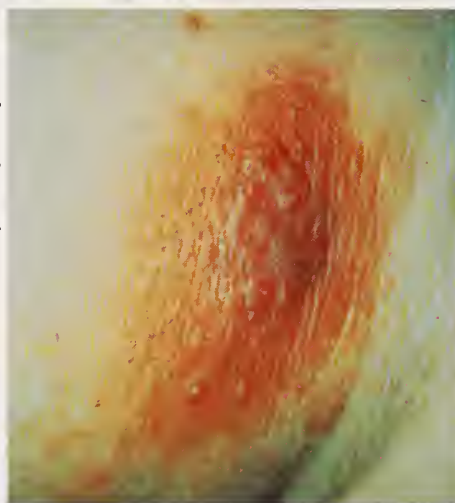


photo by Nancy Basold

Comparison of unengorged and blood-engorged ticks, about life size.



Deer ticks

Dog ticks

photo courtesy of Pfizer Central Research

**Top and bottom left:** Typical rashes — often begin as small red circle around the bite and then enlarge.

## Prevention

You can decrease risks of contact with infected ticks by wearing protective clothing including a hat, long-sleeve shirts or blouses and long trousers especially when working in woodland, high grass and ground covers (although ticks can also reside in lawns and foundation plantings). Tucking trousers into the socks or securing them around your ankles with a band can help. Wearing light-colored clothing may make it easier to detect ticks on the clothing before they get on your skin.

Using an insect repellent containing the chemical DEET on the skin repels but does

not kill ticks. **This chemical is not advised for children.** Other insect repellents can also be used. Even better may be using permethrin on your clothes. This chemical actually kills ticks (interestingly, it is derived from the flowers of the painted daisy). Cotton balls impregnated with permethrin can also be placed in the garden at sites where mice, who carry the tick, might pick them up for nesting. (**Caveat:** be careful about where you place these if children or pets are around to pick them up to play with.)

Whether keeping deer off your property will provide a significant decrease in the

number of infected ticks is not known but since deer can cause serious damage to our ornamental plants, any efforts to stop deer traffic seems worthwhile. In our own garden we have installed an eight-foot mesh fence between poles and trees surrounding three sides of the garden. Across the front we've used an ultrasound system that seems to deter deer entry. We didn't see nearly so many deer this past winter, possibly also due to the milder weather.

## Self-inspection

Most important: systematically inspect your scalp and skin and that of your family



members after being outside. Lyme disease should not result from the presence of a tick that has not attached to the skin; it requires at least 24 hours to engorge and release the spirochete. Either larva or adult ticks can cause disease. Dog ticks do not transmit this disease.

If you see a tick, remove it promptly. Use tweezers and pull slowly and steadily so the entire tick will be released. If you can, grasp the tick directly behind its head. Save the tick in case further examination or testing is required. Cleanse the skin area with alcohol and watch to ensure an expanding rash does not develop. There should be no problem if you removed the tick the first day.

### Characteristic rash

A typical rash (*erythema migrans*) may occur at the site of the tick attachment or other areas of the body. Suspect this if you have a slowly enlarging, thickened, red area of the skin often with a pale center. Sometimes there is tenderness. A fever and flu-like symptoms may accompany the rash. The rash can develop three days to months after the tick bite. Remember, the rash can occur anywhere on the body; on children it appears more often on the head and neck.

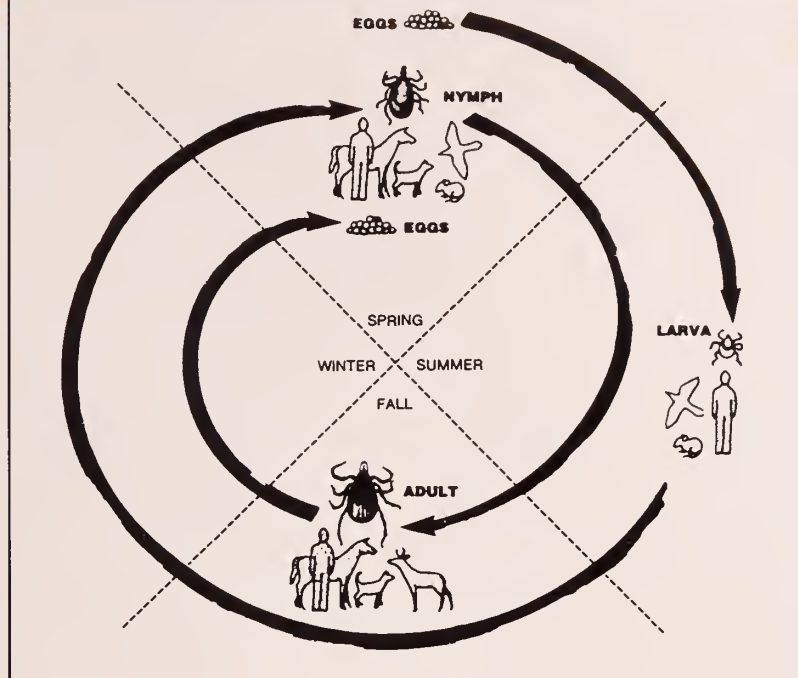
When Lyme disease is not treated, arthritis can occur. This typically involves the knees and other joints and can be intermittent or constant. Other problems can include irregular heartbeat and neurologic complications. Chronic fatigue and muscle aches may occur, but whether these are due to persistent Lyme infection that will respond to antibiotics is not clear. Lyme disease happens most often in the spring and summer, but ticks can be active year-round so as Nancy Bosold reminded us, "Be aware that cold weather doesn't eliminate the risk of running into one of these persistent creatures."

### Testing for Lyme disease

When you suspect an infection, diagnostic testing should be performed by a physician familiar with the disease. In addition to physical examination, a blood test called ELISA\*\* is usually performed. The test can be positive in a person who was infected in the past whether or not they showed any symptoms of the disease. **However, a positive test takes four to six weeks to develop after the initial infection**

\*\*ELISA (enzyme linked immunoabsorbent assay).

Life cycle of the deer tick.  
Adapted from Habicht, G.S., et al. 1987.



**and is usually not positive at the time of any initial rash.**

People who have taken antibiotics at the first sign of a rash or even on detection of a tick may never develop a positive test. When a positive ELISA test is found an additional blood test called Western blot is usually obtained. Careful interpretation of this test is critical. Bands appear on the blot but at least four are needed to be sure Lyme disease is present. These tests cannot be used to determine if an infection has been eradicated. Further testing is often indicated when neurologic symptoms such as headache appear to establish effective and appropriate treatment.

### Treatment

Treatment of Lyme disease is now virtually always effective if antibiotics are administered at the time of the initial rash. Antibiotics can usually be taken by mouth for early disease. A variety of antibiotics can be prescribed by your physician and are usually administered for 21 days. Disease that is detected later or appears unresponsive and in the presence of arthritis is often treated with a repeat course of antibiotics by mouth for up to 30 days. In some situations intravenous medication is required.

### Complications

Lyme disease can create anxiety about disability from arthritis, heart or neurologic problems. If these problems have not de-

veloped after taking appropriate antibiotics, it is unlikely they ever will. Appropriate testing and consultation with experienced physicians is important and reassuring. Lyme disease remains a puzzling disorder that has been both over- and under-diagnosed. It can be confused with numerous other ailments. There is still much to learn.

My wife and I are out there enjoying our gardening and hope that the threat of Lyme disease will not deter any of you. By exercising common sense and the precautions I've listed, you should be able to confidently protect yourself and your family.

### For More Information


The National Lyme Foundation is one of the most reliable and balanced sources of general information. (800-886-5963). Also check with your County Extension Agent.

Ralph Schumacher, M.D., is a clinical rheumatologist, researcher, professor of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, and director of the Arthritis-Immunology Center at the V.A. Medical Center, Philadelphia. Dr. Schumacher and his wife, Elizabeth, garden on a terraced hillside in Gulph Mills. Their garden was featured in the July 1988 issue of *Green Scene*.





# Take a Second Look at COLEUS

 by Ray Rogers

'Purple Emperor' grows happily and expansively at the front of a sunny border, artfully combined with the arching leaves and flower spikes of *Pennisetum setaceum* 'Rothrum' and the more solid mass of *Herbes thunbergii* 'Atropurpurea'.

Shown by Richard Hartlage



**W**hether you're a garden-trend devotee or a regular dirt gardener, it's a fact: coleus are hot and deserve your second look. Much-scorned for their supposed frowzy plant habit and "not our style, dear" coloration, coleus have gone to finishing school and are coming back in a big way. (By the way, they are now botanically recognized as *Solenostemon scutellarioides*, but I'll bet most gardeners will continue to call them coleus.)

Before getting to specific cultural details, let's dispose of a few **misconceptions**:

- **Coleus must be grown in the shade.** It's true that many will tolerate shade, but recent discoveries have shown that most coleus do very well with a fair amount of sun, and some require full sun to do their best.

- **They must be pinched regularly and heavily to keep them from falling apart and going to seed.** True enough for some: those offered in the seed catalogs are the progeny of plants bred to produce seed to sell, so it's natural that they would in turn produce plants anxious to go to seed. Modern selections are, however, almost without exception, cultivars propagated from cuttings, and most have been chosen for (among other attributes) their hesitation to run to seed. Pinching will, of course, produce more compact and symmetrical plants, no matter what the cultivar.

- **Coleus are gaudy.** Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. However, many coleus can fill exactly the same roles as, for example, a red-tinged grass or a golden-leaved barberry, at least for a season. If you're looking for color, coleus is your answer: they offer bright to dark shades of green, yellow to almost white, orange, red, pink, and purple-black, in solids, splashes, dots, borders, featherings, washes, zones, and lines.

- **They're annuals and must be replaced every year.** They are considered annuals for horticultural purposes, but, botanically speaking, coleus are short-lived perennials and can be overwintered indoors in a warm spot for at least one winter before the plants become too woody to support healthy, vigorous growth. Overwintered plants may also be used as stock plants for an abundant supply of cuttings for the next season.

- **They can be grown only in the ground, and only as dumpy little shrublets.** Far from it! They are superb choices for con-



photo by Richard Hartlage

Most coleus grow easily and beautifully as single specimens in containers. A small plant of 'Kiwi Fern', composed with a bench and sun hat, evokes the languid warmth of summer.

tainers, including hanging baskets, either by themselves or combined with other plants. Going one step further, many cultivars may be trained into magnificent topiaries in far less time than most other traditional choices would require.

### **Growing coleus**

The expression "even a child can grow them" may well have been coined with coleus in mind. They tolerate a wide range of conditions, except for extremes.

**Soil and fertility:** Average fertility, please. Poor soil will prevent the plants from realizing their full potential (especially those glorious colors), and too-rich soil will lead to soft, weak growth, and may alter foliage colors. Coleus prefer their soil rather open, so loosen up any heavy clay. Average garden soil, soil-less mixes, or soil-less mixes with about 1/4 sterilized garden soil added will all produce excellent results. A balanced water-soluble fertilizer applied biweekly (for container-grown plants) and monthly (for those in the open ground) will keep them growing strongly throughout warm weather.

**Light:** Most require more direct sun than you think to do their best. Most of the dark purple, dark red, mostly yellow, and pre-

dominantly green cultivars want full sun, with some shelter from the strongest afternoon sun in summer. Most of the rest, especially the pink-and-white-marked selections, prefer morning sun or the full, bright light under a high tree canopy, in a shaded greenhouse, or on a bright window-sill.

**Water:** It's hard to overwater coleus in the open ground (provided it's well drained) or in hanging baskets, but be careful with container-grown plants; poor drainage will lead to root rot and quick collapse of the entire plant. When overwintering stock plants, try not to use really cold water.

**Temperature:** They don't like cold air, either, and will be damaged by the slightest kiss of frost. Bob Kojko, propagator at Atlock Flower Farm in Somerset, New Jersey, recommends planting coleus out two weeks after the usual frost-free date. See Overwintering for more details.

**Propagation:** Stick some cuttings in a glass of water, and they'll be showing roots in a week. That's great, but don't leave them in the water for much longer, or the water-adapted roots may have a difficult time adjusting to soil. They also root quickly in an open rooting medium without rooting hormones, preferably in a closed



## Take a Second Look at COLEUS



photo by Richard Hartlage

Giant coleus baskets take center stage among other tender perennials under a pergola at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum in Morristown, New Jersey. Given ample room, water, and fertilizer, a coleus basket quickly produces a memorable conversation piece. The slightly wilted plant on the right reminds us to keep baskets well watered at all times, especially during hot, dry, bright, or windy weather.

environment or under a mist system. Tip cuttings with a few sets of well-developed leaves are best, but even single-node cuttings (basically a set of leaves with a bit of stem below) will root just as well.

Seeds are just as easy. Sow the dust-fine seeds thinly on the surface of some finely milled sphagnum or fine soil mix and keep moist and warm in bright light. Don't bother starting them until mid-April unless you have the facilities to keep them warm; otherwise, they'll just sulk. Transplant to individual pots after they produce two or three sets of true leaves.

**Pests and diseases:** Coleus can grow an entire season outdoors without suffering a single bug bite. Spider mites might build up in dry conditions. Whiteflies will flock to greenhouse-grown plants and should be controlled, if only to prevent populations from exploding and migrating to other plants.

**Overwintering:** Coleus want to be warm (minimum of 60°F) and on the dry side with as much light as possible in winter. If you keep them too cold or wet, they will drop lots of leaves and look terrible, if they don't flat-out die. There are a few options for carrying them over the winter: (1) Bring in mature plants before frost and keep them

growing at 60°F in bright light with reduced water and low fertility, then cut them back hard in January. New growth will appear slowly, but it will gradually fill in and will be perfect for taking cuttings in April or May. (2) Root some cuttings in August or September, and then keep them growing through winter. Pinch them back a couple of times to keep them small and bushy. The advantages are they will be smaller and more vigorous than more mature specimens. (3) Forget about overwintering them, and buy new ones next year.

### Using coleus

Forget about growing isolated specimens or a soldier-row along a bed. Instead, grow them in bold masses in a bed of their own, or integrate their colors and forms into a herbaceous or mixed border. The prostrate to semi-prostrate ones (such as 'Indian Frills' and 'Inky Fingers') make superb groundcovers in a hurry. Do you yearn for the good old days of Victorian bedding-out schemes? Coleus were one of the backbones of that form of horticultural theater, and you can pursue that muse (although probably on a considerably less grand scale) in a corner of your own garden.

Coleus grow happily in containers, pro-

### Growing a Hanging Basket

Here's how to produce a spectacular coleus hanging basket, as done by Richard Hartlage, former supervisor of horticulture for the Morris County, N.J., Parks Systems.

In early June, start with a sturdy 30-in. moss-lined basket equipped with strong chains for hanging. Fill with Promix or similar soil-less medium (baskets made with media containing garden soil will become extremely heavy as the plants grow large).

Before planting, incorporate Osmocote at 1½ times the recommended rate. Insert groups of three to five three-node, pinched, rooted cuttings of three to five different cultivars, distributed evenly at the top and along the sides, but don't plant any below the bottom half of the basket. Hang in the permanent spot before watering (see elsewhere for information on sunlight needs, and make sure the support is strong enough to hold a very heavy basket).

Pinch regularly (about six times by the end of July), water daily (twice once the weather becomes consistently hot), and fertilize weekly with Peter's 20-20-20. Under this high-powered regime, the coleus will fill in by the end of July and will reach a spread of at least 4 ft. by mid-August.

Your friends and neighbors won't believe their eyes, and you won't believe how heavy the basket is when the time comes to take it down at the end of the season (ask for strong-backed help!). Hartlage adds that a 14-in. basket planted with three plants each of three different cultivars will produce an equally attractive, albeit less stupefying, result.

vided you give them enough room. One small plant potted in June can easily fill an 8-in. pot by September, and three plants would suit a 12- to 14-in. container, provided you keep them watered and fed. Their wide range of colors makes them great subjects for combining with other plants in summer containers; just be sure to grow them with plants liking the same conditions.

If you really want to impress your gardening friends and neighbors, put together a hanging basket of one or more coleus cultivars, or grow one as a standard. See the boxes.





You can produce a spectacular coleus standard in a few years by carefully training and pinching a suitable cultivar. The plant shown here, with the author, is 'Pineapple Queen'. Other suitable cultivars include 'Big Red', 'Black Magic', 'Golden Girl', 'Inky Fingers', 'Kiwi Fern', and 'Lime Queen'.

### Coleus Topiaries

If you've wanted to grow a topiary but didn't want to invest the time or money in a more traditional myrtle or rosemary, why not try producing a standard coleus?

Start with a well-rooted tip cutting of a suitable cultivar (see caption) in a 6-in. pot. Keep it growing straight up, removing sideshoots before they get too firm, and insert a stake once the plant exceeds 12 in. in height. When the plant reaches the desired height, pinch out the center. Allow three sets of side branches to grow out, and pinch them when they have produced four or five sets of leaves. Repeat the process until the ball of foliage has filled out.

You can have a small topiary by the end of one season, or a big, grand one at the end of two or three years. Of course, you will need to overwinter the more long-term standards. Also keep in mind that coleus are short-lived and brittle, so the day will come when your topiary begins to fail, or side branches begin to break away. In the meantime, however, you will have enjoyed a spectacular topiary in the time it would take just to begin seeing the results of most other topiary subjects.

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Ray Rogers is a lifelong gardener and remembers starting coleus from a Northrup-King Punch 'n Gro TM when he was a child. This year he will incorporate several dark-foliaged coleus cultivars into his "Portals of Hell" garden at his new home in North Brunswick, New Jersey. When not gardening, he is senior editor at DK Publishing, Inc. in New York City.



# Taking Herbert Seriously

## *The Foundling: A night blooming cereus or?*



by Helen T. Brunet

When I look around our plant room, I can recall how each plant came to us. We rescued the big bougainvillea from a derelict greenhouse in Virginia. The numerous pots of clivia started out as one plant that I bought from a florist 15 years ago. The ancient Christmas cactus was originally a house-warming present for our first house. The camellias were given to us by people moving to a New York apartment. In other words, some plants were gifts, some were purchases.

But Herbert, the night blooming cereus, is harder to classify. He wasn't a gift, nor was he a purchase. He was, you might say, a house guest that never went home.

Herbert arrived on our doorstep at least 15 summers ago, like a foundling baby in a 19th century novel, with note attached:

Please keep this plant while I'm in  
Bermuda — his name is Herbert.

Thanks,  
Bootsie

P.S. He's a night blooming cereus.

It is not unusual for friends to leave plants for me to care for in summer. We

keep our house plant collection outside under the deck from early June until September, and there is plenty of room.

But Herbert's arrival was different. Bootsie wasn't really a friend. And, as I studied the contents of the clay pot, there was some question as to whether Herbert was really a plant.

What I held in my hand was a six-inch clay pot filled with solid adobe. Through a crack protruded a single pale green stalk. Was it plastic? I tugged to see if it had been stuck in the adobe as a joke, but it held fast. It felt like something that had once been alive.

Disgusted, I put the "plant" under the deck and watered it along with everything else. I continued to think of it as Herbert. My plants don't have names, of course, but they do have clearly discernible identities. In Herbert's case, he had no identity except his name.

By July, the rest of the house plants had started to react to summer weather with total abandon. They grew in all directions. An orchid flowered before I had spotted the emerging bud; the orange trees began to drop their fragrant white flowers and set

tiny green fruits. But, except for the arrival of two postcards from Bermuda addressed to Herbert, the plant, his existence remained unchanged.

September came. The postcards stopped. I knew Bootsie must have come home. I called to make sure. Yes, she assured me, she would stop by soon. I continued moving the other plants into the house.

By late October, Bootsie hadn't come. And her phone didn't answer. In fact I never met her or spoke with her again. I stuck the pot in the plant room. When it was still there the following spring I resigned myself to keep it. I repotted the green shoot into a clay pot half the size of the old one and a soil mix of sand and compost and garden soil.

The effect was instantaneous. Leafless shoots like long, thin, spears of asparagus appeared all over Herbert at odd angles. Then the shoots developed leaves. By fall, Herbert had a stately collection of outlandish leaves on long bracts, like multiple sets of limp moose antlers.

For the next several summers we moved Herbert outside, using great care not to break the network of long stems and



photos supplied by Helen T. Brunet

Herbert, the plant, turned out not to be night blooming cereus but a dutchman's-pipe cactus from Mexico.



leaves. We grew fond of his ugliness like children with a Cabbage Patch doll.

Eventually, Herbert grew so big that we had to leave him inside for the summer — on a high shelf in the plant room next to a Victorian owl statue. Herbert's longest branches spread over the ceiling rafters for support.

And then one summer day it happened. I was reading in the plant room, but Herbert kept intruding on my attention. I looked up without enthusiasm.

He had developed a small growth on one of his antlers. Just a little pinkish swelling. On many cacti, this could be a developing flower bud. On Herbert it was sure to mean another antler.

Two weeks passed and the swelling changed to a long, shaggy pink tube with a tulip-shaped bud at the end. Was it possible that Herbert was, in fact, going to flower?

The answer came at dusk when the heady scent of the jungle filled the plant room. Herbert's flower was snow white, five inches across, with countless yellow-tipped filaments at the center. It was a flower to make any plant proud. We photographed the bloom in all its stages. We invited our neighbors over. We drank a toast.

That was only the beginning of Herbert's fecundity. Every summer since then he has transformed the plant room into a tropical paradise, one night at a time. Last summer he had three periods of flowering, each with about 25 flowers opening over three or four nights. The first flowering is usually around the fourth of July, the second in August, just after Labor Day. In the September flower period, the flowers are usually smaller than in summer.

The opening of a flower is signaled by the loosening of the strands that encase the flower bud. In less than two hours the flower can change from tight bud to a fully opened flower. We are often unaware of an opening until we notice the sensual aroma.

By morning the stalks hang limp, holding collapsed flowers like so many wet mops put out to dry. They are so terrible looking that I usually cut them off at the leaves rather than waiting for them to dry and fall off, which may take weeks.

Herbert still surprises us. Last fall, during the September flowering, some of the flowers remained open until about 9 o'clock in the morning, giving us the heady sweetness of the flower scent with our morning coffee.



The author's foundling plant first blossomed several years after it was left on her doorstep.

Herbert's clay pot is eight inches in diameter and sits in a deep saucer. During the summer, I water generously from the top and keep the saucer filled with an inch or so of water so that the pot never dries out. After the last bloom in fall, I water Herbert like a cactus — a thorough watering every three weeks or so and a dry saucer.

From March to October I fertilize Herbert twice a month with Peter's Plant Food, 15-30-15, diluted to one tablespoon of blue powder per gallon of water.

The plant room where Herbert grows faces east, south and west. A skylight brightens the cathedral ceiling area where his branches rest on the ceiling beams, but he gets very little, if any, direct sunshine.

Herbert has a remarkable tolerance for cold. The plant room usually goes down to the low forties at night in the dead of winter, but in January of 1994 we lost power overnight in a bitter cold period. The temperature in the plant room may have gone as low as 30°F. Herbert was unfazed, although the bougainvillea growing up on the rafters beside him died back to the crown.

It turns out that Herbert is a bit of an impostor. He is not a true Night Blooming Cereus. The real Queen of the Night is *Selenicereus grandiflorus*, discovered by European explorers in the American tropics and grown at Hampton Court Palace in the late 17th century.

Herbert is instead a Dutchman's-pipe cactus from Mexico, *Epiphyllum oxypetalum*.

But we love him anyway.

Helen Tower Brunet, gardens in Mendham, New Jersey, and is a frequent contributor to *Green Scene*.

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photo by Richard Hartlage

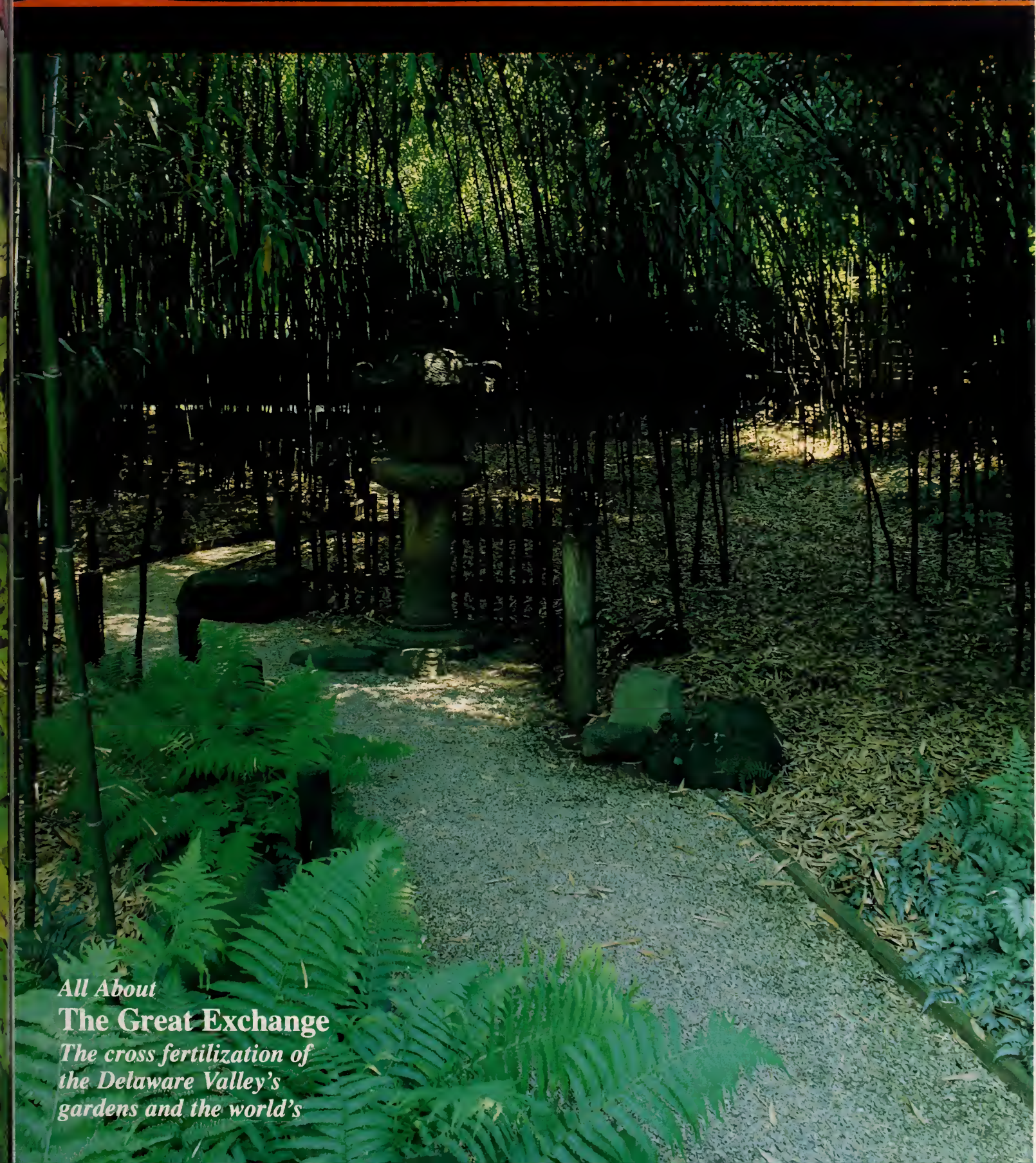




# GREEN SCENE

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24.



36.

## CORRECTION NOTE DATE CHANGE

In the May/June article *Daylilies — The Flower of Light*, page 7 the correct dates for the **Daylily Dazzle** are **Saturday, July 5 and Saturday, July 19** from 9 am to 12 noon at Darrel Apps's Woodside Nursery in Bridgeton, NJ.

Front cover: Swiss Pines, a public garden in Charlestown, Pennsylvania, was designed by the contemporary Japanese landscape architect Katsuo Saito and developed by Arnold Bartschi from 1957 'til his death in March, 1996. Beneath the bamboo he planted shade-tolerant ferns. See *Japanese Gardens — The Possibilities for Delaware Valley Gardens* by Claire Sawyers on page 20. photo by Maggie Oster



*Grow with us.*

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THE PENNSYLVANIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

100 N. 20th Street, Philadelphia, Pa. 19103-1495

Telephone: 215-988-8800

Horticultural Hotline: 215-988-8777

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Printer: ALCOM Printing Group, Inc.

The GREEN SCENE, (USPS 955580), Volume 25, No. 6, published bimonthly, January, March, May, July, September, November, by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, a non-profit membership organization at 100 N. 20th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103. Subscription: \$12.95—Single Copy: \$2.75 (plus \$1.05 shipping). Second class postage paid at Philadelphia, PA 19103. • **POSTMASTER:** Send address change to THE GREEN SCENE, 100 N. 20th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103.

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**Green Scene** subscriptions are part of the membership benefits for:

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*the green scene / july 1997*





# The World Is In Our Gardens

*Influences on Delaware Valley Gardens*



by Elizabeth P. McLean

Your garden — whether a window-sill, a city backyard, or a large space in the suburbs — has been shaped by what appeals to you. Perhaps you read about a garden you came to covet, or you saw a combination of plants on a garden tour that you thought would look just right in your own garden. Perhaps you were given a new plant that you just had to find room for. If you love to cook, there may be favorite herbs that you simply must have always handy.

Some influences are obvious and some so subtle that area gardeners have absorbed them almost without being aware of them. The sources of those influences over the last 300 years have come from the world over. William Penn may have sent for English seeds and apple grafts, but he also brought over a French vigneron to develop and manage his vineyard on "Fairmount." In the next century, John Bartram may have been sending American plants and seeds to Peter Collinson in England, but Collinson was also sending Bartram the "new" aster from China (*Callistephus chinensis*).

Victorians enjoyed not only newly imported Japanese maples, but wanted Japanese gardens as well. Now, without being aware of it, we buy plants that have been developed in other countries such as *Sedum* 'Autumn Joy' from Germany. Our Delaware Valley gardens, public and private, would be bland indeed, if the whole world had not supplied our palette since the first colonists set foot on our fertile soil.

## *From the Motherland: the English tradition*

Although not the first colonists to the Delaware Valley (the Dutch and Swedes were here first), the English Quakers brought the first *lasting* horticultural tradition. Penn established Philadelphia as a "greene country towne . . . where every house [would have] ground on each side for

*the green scene* / July 1997



photo by Elizabeth P. McLean

In the 18th century, Peter Collinson sent Philadelphia's John Bartram seeds from "the new aster from China" (*Callistephus chinensis*). This plant was photographed at Monticello, Charlottesville, Va.

Gardens or Orchards or Fields . . . [and which would] always be wholesome." These English colonists also brought garden styles and techniques of the late 17th and early 18th centuries. The style was simple and rectilinear, the plants mostly practical: vegetables were good "keepers," fruits were often grafted. Even some of their flowers had practical uses; roses were used to make rosewater, pinks to spice wine. The colonists had to amend this knowledge, from experience and books, to the local conditions — such as Philadelphia's hot summers.

Even after the Revolution, our horticultural

influence from England continued. At the Woodlands (now a cemetery in West Philadelphia) William Hamilton planted his estate in the manner of the English landscape garden, with sweeps of lawn and groups of trees and shrubs, which Jefferson described as "the only rival which I have known in America to what may be seen in England." In the mid-nineteenth century, Andrew Jackson Downing designed Alvarthorpe (now a park in Jenkintown) for Joshua Fisher in the picturesque style promoted by the English John Claudius Loudon. At "Compton," now the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsyl-



# The World Is In Our Gardens



photo courtesy of the Library Co. of Philadelphia

Andrew Jackson Downing designed Alvathorpe (now a park in Jenkintown) in the mid-19th century, in the style promoted by the English landscape-gardener and garden writer John Claudius Loudon.

vania, John and Lydia Morris created an “English park.”

Closer to our contemporary gardens, however, is the influence of two English garden writers, William Robinson and Gertrude Jekyll, who introduced the “cottage style” of hardy perennial borders, which became the mainstay, in a lesser way, of the suburban garden. Part of Caroline Sinkler’s 1920’s garden at the Highlands (Whitemarsh, Pa.) was a Jekyll-style herbaceous border. Now, Sir John Thouron maintains a superb double border in the English (and Scottish) tradition at Doe Run (Unionville, Pa.). We struggle with the concept now, trying to balance colors and textures and keep the border interesting throughout the growing season; it is much more difficult here, with our hot summers, which shorten the bloom-time of the plants. Judy McKeon well describes the influence of contemporary British gardens elsewhere in this issue.

Of course, it was more than English books, garden styles and plants that crossed the Atlantic; it was people, and we in the Delaware Valley, were largely English. Even after the Revolution, however, British immigrants were enriching our horticultural life. The first American seed house, Landreth’s, was founded about 1793 in Philadelphia by Englishman David Landreth. Thomas Meehan, who trained at Kew, worked at first for Buist, before he went on to establish his own nursery in Philadelphia. Meehan became editor of two garden magazines, and influential in a number of horticultural endeavors, including establishing city parks. As late as 1852 only three percent of the working gardeners in the United States were native born or naturalized Americans.

## **Pennsylvania Dutch**

Our “Pennsylvania Dutch” were originally Germans; the word “Dutch” is the English corruption of the German word “Deutsch” for “German” — the founders, of course, of Germantown. In 1683, Francis Daniel Pastorius brought over a group of German pietists who built houses close to one another along Germantown Road, with narrow three-acre lots stretching behind. Pastorius’s property had “a pretty little garden producing chiefly cordial, stomachic and culinary herbs,” as well as an orchard and vineyard. One visitor to Germantown in the middle of the 18th century, reported that “each home had a fine garden.” Nineteenth century German immigrants, such as Frederick Pursh, who published information about many of the plants brought back by Lewis and Clark, were more important for their contribution to botany than to horticulture.

Many later German immigrants — Mennonites and Amish — went west of Philadelphia to establish farms in Lancaster County, known then as now for their productivity, as well as for the quality of their orchards. Although their produce has filled our markets for 300 years, Pennsylvania German garden styles and techniques do not seem to have penetrated far beyond their own community. Now, however, a fresh influx comes from Germany, in the form of hardy, new perennials, so well described in Robert Herman’s article: sedum, astilbe, phlox, salvias and more.

## **Vive la French influence**

British gardeners may have tended Philadelphia gardens until the end of the 19th century, but it was understood that no one could manage the grapevine better

than the French. The colonists were early impressed by the plethora of wild grapes that adorned so many of the trees. Penn tried to establish a vineyard on his estate “Springettsbury” (near where the Art Museum now stands). For this he brought over André Doz, a French *vigneron*. More than a hundred years later, the ‘Company for the Improvement of the Vine’ was formed for the same purpose, employing Peter Legaux to grow grapes for wine. Neither attempt was successful — nor were other early attempts, with or without French *vignerons*, such as Jefferson’s at Monticello.

A profound influence, however, came with the arrival of one family, that of Eleuthère Irénée du Pont, who arrived from France in 1800, with a passport describing him as “*botaniste*.” At Hagley, on the Brandywine, E.I. du Pont built his house, and planted a *potager*, or vegetable garden in the French style. (The garden has been nicely restored.) Mr. du Pont not only founded the company that continues to bear his name, but seems to have passed on genes for gardening. His descendants’ gardens include Longwood Gardens; Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library; and Mount Cuba for the Study of Piedmont Flora.

E.I. du Pont not only encouraged his children’s interests in horticulture, but also encouraged two French botanists and plant collectors, André Michaux and his son, Francois André. The Michaux collected from the Hudson Bay to the Carolinas, and introduced the ginkgo, the crepe myrtle and the camellia to the United States.

The French style of gardening, described elsewhere in this issue by Mac Griswold, did not have an immediate impact on the Delaware Valley beyond the du Pont





Liddon Pennock's Meadowbrook Farm in Meadowbrook, Pa., reflects traces of French formality.

family. After World War I, however, the elaborate formal French parterre was deemed the only appropriate style for the great estates, such as that of E.T. Stotesbury's "Whitemarsh Hall." A style so dependent on wealth and trained gardeners vanished with the Second World War. One can now see traces of French formality, however, in smaller gardens, such as Liddon Pennock's Meadowbrook Farm.

### ***More than maples from Japan***

Japan had kept itself isolated from the rest of the world so successfully that only a few plants, such as *Aucuba*, reached the West before Admiral Perry "opened up" Japan in 1854. Philadelphia's David Landreth sent seeds to the Japanese on Perry's trip and evidently received some in return (although we don't know what). Japanese influence was not truly felt upon American gardens, however, until the Centennial, when the excitement of Japanese style and "exotic" plants were immediate.

One who was evidently stirred was John Morris, who, with his sister Lydia, traveled to Japan 11 years later. On return Morris began adding a series of Japanese gardens to his eclectic Victorian estate. The Japanese garden designer Mr. Muto not only

*continued*



The 'Okame' Cherry, a PHS Gold Medal Plant, on Elizabeth and Bill McLean's property in Wynnewood, Pa.



# The World Is In Our Gardens



photo by Elizabeth P. McLean

*Paeonia 'Joseph Rock'.* Peonies from China were introduced into the Delaware Valley by Ernest H. Wilson in the early 20th century. See the collection of tree peonies at Scott Arboretum, Swarthmore College.

created the "hill and cloud" garden at Compton, but also the Temple Garden in Fairmount Park. Morris even had a Japanese garden created in his fernery.

A number of Japanese gardens have been created in the Delaware Valley in the 20th century and are described in this issue by Claire Sawyers. The Japanese style has moved into relatively few private gardens, perhaps because it is difficult to marry with Western architecture. However, Ikebana, as described in Cheryl Monroe's article, has been influential in flower arranging beyond the perfections of the Ikebana Society; its graceful simplicity fits well with a number of decors. Bonsai, too, has taken hold, appreciated by many apart from its patient practitioners.

Many of us have Japanese influences in our gardens that we may not be aware of, and that is through Japanese plants. We may associate Japanese cherries with Washington, D.C. in the spring, but they grow throughout the Delaware Valley. The 'Okame' cherry is a PHS "Gold Medal" plant, a fast-growing tree of airy architecture and long-lasting bloom. The chrysanthemum achieved such instant popularity that there was an American Chrysanthemum Society by 1890. The fall chrysanthemum display at Longwood Gardens is famous. Where would many of us be without Japanese *Pachysandra* as a low-maintenance ground cover for shady spots?

## China

Most of the Chinese influence in Delaware Valley gardens comes through plants rather than style. Many Chinese plants have done well here because the climate and soil of much of central China is similar to that of the Delaware Valley: for example, the China aster sent by Jesuits in the 18th century; *Clematis lanuginosa* brought back by Robert Fortune and others in the 19th century; the regal lily, *Clematis montana rubens* and many other species introduced by Ernest Wilson in the early 20th century. Mature specimens can be seen at many of our arboreta, such as the Katsura tree at the Morris Arboretum, or the collection of tree peonies at the Scott Arboretum.

Bonsai, tree peonies and chrysanthemums are just some of the more dramatic Asian influences in our gardens. Behind the fences of community gardens, and in backyards all through Philadelphia are Asian plants in great variety, described in Terry Mushovic's article. We may not see these gardens, but we now can see and taste a variety of Asian vegetables from our markets. Ethnic gardening probably survives most strongly in these community gardens. Those of us fortunate enough to judge in the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's City Gardens contest can attest to the joy of an Italian plum tomato ripe off the vine, African-American greens, or a Philippine squash.

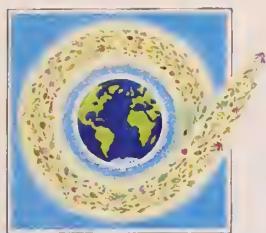
As the Quaker spirit of tolerance in the 17th century attracted many from other countries to settle in the Delaware Valley, so the climate and soil provided a welcome situation for a broad range of plants as well. We are fortunate here to have a variety of microclimates (straddling zones 6 and 7) and a variety of soil conditions — from the Piedmont to the Coastal Plain. Although we may not always want to describe it that way, this area also has a temperate climate and moderate rainfall. We are rich in native flora, for here the southern and northern limits of many plants meet and overlap. Knowing what native plants thrive here can help us choose appropriate "foreign" plants. For example, *Rhododendron*, native or not, prefer acid soil.

We in the Delaware Valley have a tradition — albeit imperfect — of learning from the larger world, of welcoming others from abroad, adapting their ideas and incorporating their plants into our gardens. We have had to learn that a seemingly charming "foreigner" such as the Norway maple or the Japanese honeysuckle can "take over," as have the English sparrow and starling we imported a century ago.

We are learning to respect the "wild" all plants come from, so that we try to choose nursery-propagated bulbs, and avoid those dug from the hills in Turkey or Spain. We are beginning to come full circle, however. While always tempted by the "new" and "exotic," we are coming to appreciate our own. Native plants, such as the bee balm (*Monarda didyma*), which John Bartram discovered and sent abroad 250 years ago, have been "improved," and now appear in many varieties in our gardens, alongside the Siberian iris and Chinese lilies (the latter hybridized in Oregon). Many varieties of the Michmas daisy, which the British developed from our New York aster (*Aster nova-belgiae*) and British-born Exbury azaleas, some of whose parents are American, grace our gardens. We have given many of our native plants to the world, and the world is now in our gardens.

Elizabeth P. McLean is a member of PHS Council. She is a garden and botanical historian. The garden she and her husband Bill maintain in Wynnewood contains a variety of native and foreign plants in an informal setting.





# The French Connection

 by Mac Griswold

**“F**rench design was not much liked,” says an Old Philadelphian, rather stiffly, when I ask her about whether French style influenced her city’s gardens around the turn of the century, the peak years of estate garden-making. It’s true that French influence has been negligible in Philadelphia. It has been “not much liked,” perhaps both because French immigrants were never as numerous as English or German ones, and because the idea of Frenchness has seemed too fancy for a city that likes to remember its Quaker past. The Bush-Browns, Louise and James, in their authoritative *Portraits of Philadelphia Gardens* (Dorrance Co.),\* published in 1929, give their opinion as to why France never had the chance to exert her pernicious monarchical influence on their city. “The ostentatious and lavish French style had had its vogue [in England] during the latter years of the seventeenth century, but it had found no favor here [in Philadelphia], so foreign was it to the spirit of the free-thinking pioneers.”

*continued*

The *potager*, or “kitchen garden,” at the chateau of Villandry, in the Loire valley, memorably combines vegetables with decorative plants in striking patterns. To Joachim Carvallo, and his wife, Ann Coleman Carvallo, of Philadelphia, the Renaissance-inspired design symbolized a vanishing Christian hierarchy, where all creatures, great and small, had flourished together in their assigned places.

photo by Ed Lindemann





# The French Connection

## ***The Philadelphia connection: Villandry***

Next spring, however, the focus of the Philadelphia Flower Show will be one of the most famous gardens in France, Villandry. Many are familiar with the *potager*, whose nine patterned squares are embroidered with cabbages and leeks as well as flowers — the perfect French Renaissance garden. But Villandry holds a couple of surprises for most viewers. The *potager*, and all the other gardens on those three fabulous terraces, turn out to be about two centuries younger than we imagine at first glance. They are the masterwork of Joachim Carvallo, a Spanish doctor who bought the chateau in 1906. He wanted to reshape the gardens as he imagined they might have been in the time of Jean le Breton, who was granted the place in 1532 by François I, France's first great royal gardenmaker. (Fontainebleau was François I's principal effort.) For inspiration, since there was no trace of le Breton's original gardens, Carvallo turned to the 1570 engravings of French gardens by Jacques Androuet du Cerceau — and to the depictions of Benedictine monasteries — and to the gardens at simple manor houses and peasant cottages in Touraine. He installed his eclectic creation on 18th-century terraces he discovered buried under the 19th century *jardin anglais*, or landscape park. The other surprise at Villandry is that the entire imaginative and beautiful effort was fueled by the Philadelphia fortune of steel heiress Ann Coleman — Carvallo's wife. The two had met as medical students in the laboratories of the great French physiologist, Charles Richet. (Ann Coleman, an unusual woman for her day, already possessed a degree in chemistry and biology from Bryn Mawr.)

## ***Revival style***

Interestingly, the restoration or revival fever that the Carvallos, particularly Joachim, felt so strongly was strikingly paralleled across the Atlantic. Villandry's gardens were created at exactly the same time that the showiest French revival-style gardens in Philadelphia were at their greenest, in the first decades of the twentieth century. But before launching into a discussion of French revival-style gardens in Philadelphia, it's worth considering how the idea of "revival styles" — English, French, Italian, Dutch, Colonial — arose in the first place.

In the nineteenth century, new forms of inexpensive prints and illustrations circu-

lated the concept of style more widely than ever before. Eclecticism — the choosing and combining of styles — flourished. Industrialization and urbanization aroused a pervasive nostalgia for what in retrospect looked like a happier, safer, more politically stable and more spiritual past. The Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the English 18th century — almost any historical period had stronger attractions than their own miser-

***Seventeenth-century French style did sneak in to leave its mark on the heart of the Quaker City. The Benjamin Franklin Parkway was commissioned by Stotesbury and designed by Jacques Gréber, who was as good a progressive urbanist as he was a reactionary landscape architect.***

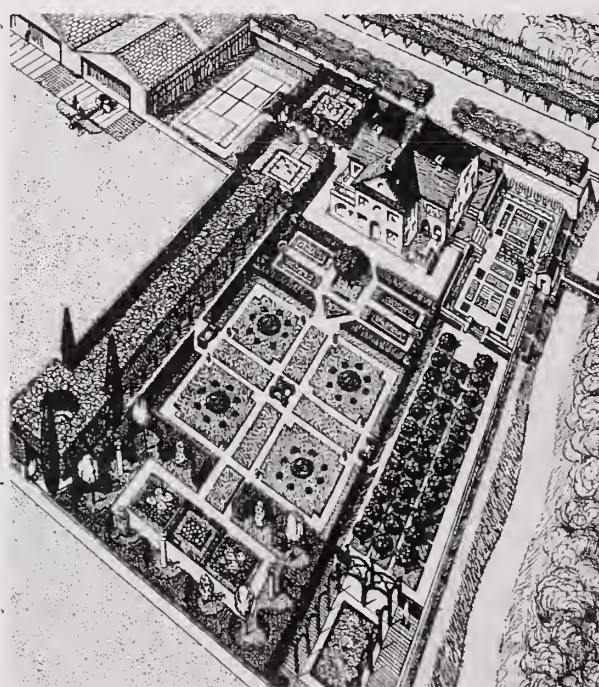
able present day for artists, architects and garden designers. Nationalism also played a role as people stopped to reevaluate their countries' histories, always looking at the most glorious periods, of course. And the personal possession of culture and power implied by such displays of style was deeply satisfying.

It's hard to believe that gardens owe much to political thought, social theory, and whatever brand of philosophy is currently popular — but they do. Beneath the cabbages and roses always run the electric intellectual and emotional currents that

animate style, currents often unperceived by the gardenmaker, who fondly imagines that he or she is just "making a garden."

In England, the Arts and Crafts movement produced Sir Frank Crisp, who wrote two large volumes about medieval gardens, and William Robinson and Sir Reginald Blomfield, who fought a pitched battle in print over formal gardens in England (Robinson against, Blomfield in favor of). On the ground, their gardens didn't look so different from each other, though photos and engravings of Robinson's plantings at Gravetye Manor, for instance, do look wilder than what Blomfield proposed. They are more calculatedly untidy, with masses of plants literally spilling over each other. But both embraced geometric form near the house and revived the enclosure, which had been swept away in the 18th century craze for landscape parks. Most influential was Gertrude Jekyll, whose love for the rural Old England she saw disappearing around her, spurred her on to invent and write about the luscious cottage-garden borders we still admire so much today. In Italy, English and American expatriates reinvented the gardens of Florence, Venice, and Rome, or "restored" them to what they presumed had been their former glory. At home in America, both the "old-time garden" and the Colonial Revival style were the results of our first look backward at our own history, following the Philadelphia Centennial exhibition of 1876. It turned out we did have a material culture

courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Thomas J. Watson Library.



"Avec l'Aviateur," a 1919 woodcut by André Vera, depicts classic 17th century French garden geometry as it was adapted at the turn of the century for modern French suburban life; it included an airplane hangar and a tennis court. The Veras were part of a French garden restoration and preservation movement that saw landscape design as an expression of national character.

\*Available on loan to members through the PHS Library.





A lantern slide of Ropsley, the four-acre garden surrounding Francis S. McIlhenney's Norman French-style 1920s house in Chestnut Hill, had as a focal point a fountain set in a retaining wall. The same aerial hedge of pollarded plane trees behind the house is seen in Vera's woodcut.

worth preserving, after all.

In France, after decades of civil upheaval and costly attempts to match the English in the colonial race and keep the Germans out of France, the Sun King's style had been resurrected, presumably to restore "la gloire." In gardens, this revival showed up as a nationalistic reaction to the ubiquitous *jardin anglais*, the gardenesque lawn with winding paths, trees, shrubs, and cut-out flowerbeds that had become the norm for parks and suburban gardens in France for nearly a century. The landscape architect, Henri Duchêne (1841–1902), restored the gardens of Champs, Chaumont, Sully and Breteuil, among others, and his son, the designer, Achille Duchêne (1866–1947), designed exquisite private formal gardens in France and England, and on both American coasts. "We have our own style," proclaimed the Vera brothers, Andre and Paul, in *Les Jardins*, published in 1919 in Paris.

### "French Provincial" and "Palace" styles

So what exactly was understood by the word "French" in Philadelphia, when speaking about gardens? "French garden design" was actually two styles: one could

be called "provincial" and the other "palace" style. Each was part and parcel of an overall architectural look. If there was a French accent that suited Old Philadelphia, it was the first — manorial French, Norman French, what today gets called "French Provincial." In furniture the clues were fruitwood *bergères* and *toile de Jouy* or other modest printed fabrics; in architecture, solid, medium-sized stone houses with round turrets, or *tourelles*; in gardens, read *potager* instead of *patte d'oie* or goosefoot, and *parterre*. If palace gardening was high style, then the low style equivalent was surely Norman French. Palace gardens required rural acres; Norman French gardens were compact and handsomely suburban. Palace gardeners were in love with expanded flat space, sheets of water, and distant horizons. Norman French Philadelphia gardeners, if we must call them that, loved enclosure — and plants. Palace gardening in America recalled the splendid seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; Norman French gardens looked back to the Renaissance and even to the Middle Ages, like the Carvallos at Villandry.

### French Provincial

"French provincial" taste produced

places like Ropsley, the Norman French house and garden designed by Mellor & Meigs in 1917 for Francis S. McIlhenney in Chestnut Hill, as well as "The French Village," designed by Robert A. McGoodwin in the late '20s, also in Chestnut Hill. By this time Philadelphians of means had slowly begun to move out of their beloved "greene country towne." Many of their architects and landscape architects had either been to the Ecole des Beaux Arts, in Paris, or were influenced by the styles their colleagues brought home.

Enclosed gardens with a carefully composed variety of small outdoor "rooms" were defined by stone walls and clipped hedges in beech, yew and boxwood. Beds and paths were shaped with corners, not curves. This modest geometry and combination of practicality and finely crafted detail suited Old Philadelphians' sober elegance. But in truth, except for the occasional architectural inflection of a *tourelle* or a piece of French garden sculpture, it was as difficult to tell the difference between the "French Provincial" garden and the other Renaissance revival styles as to locate the difference between Blomfield and Robinson.

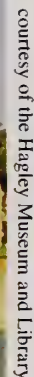
### Eleutherian Mills

The most authentically "French provincial" garden in the Philadelphia area that we can still see today is actually in Delaware, on the Brandywine Creek, and was made long before any idea of revival styles arose by Eleuthère Irénée du Pont, who described himself as *botaniste* on his passport when he left France in 1799. The garden he first laid out in 1802 was abandoned after a powder mill explosion in 1890 and used variously as a pasture and a potato patch. The same urge to preserve and restore that powered the making of gardens at Villandry has also returned this early garden at Eleutherian Mills to us with a restoration by the Eleutherian Mills-Hagley Foundation, which began in 1968.

Irénée du Pont was making a garden the way he had been taught at home, with all the arts of good husbandry. It must have reminded him of his family's garden at Bois-des-Fossés, in the Gâtinais, near Paris. His main aim was to provide himself and his family and guests with a year's supply of fresh fruits, herbs, and vegetables. But he also truly was *botaniste* by nature as well as training and could not resist collecting American plants (and purchasing them from Bartram's Nursery). He was familiar with all the members of the French botanist/naturalist mafia of the day: from well-



courtesy of the Hagley Museum and Library



courtesy of the Hagley Museum and Library

courtesy of the Hagley Museum and Library

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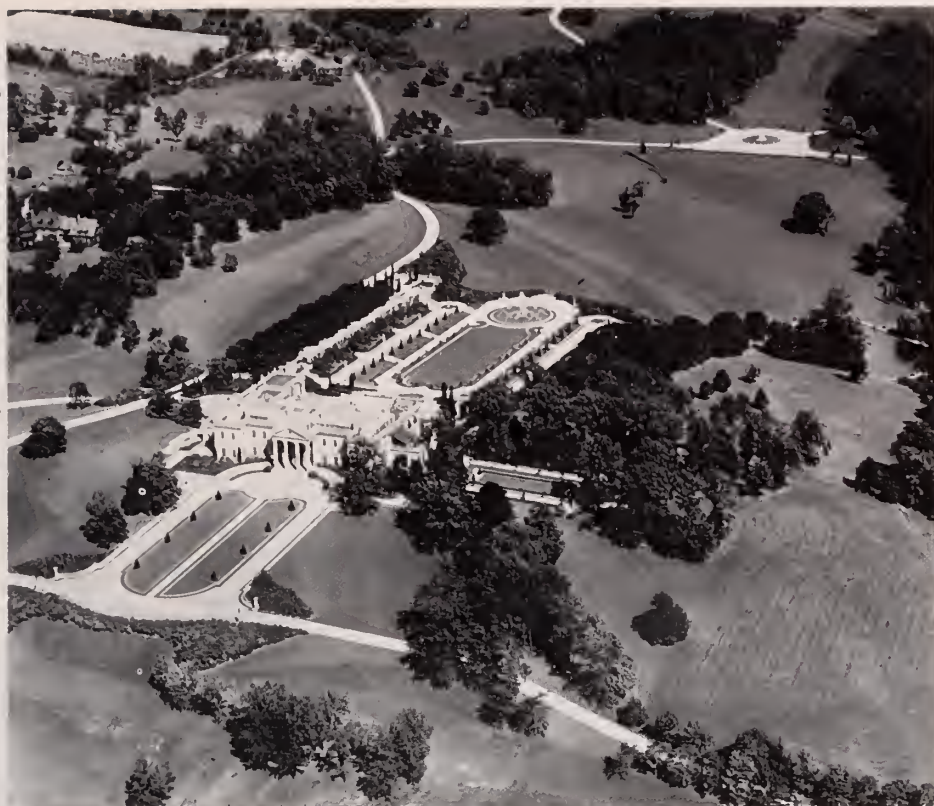
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Plan of old garden, Eleutherian Mills. In 1925 Victorine du Pont Foster, granddaughter of E.I. du Pont, drew the garden as she remembered it in 1880, and as it had been since the 1820s. The radial geometry of the rose garden gives a French accent to the design.

### Palace gardens

the green scene / july 1997





Whitemarsh Hall. The masterful pattern of Jacques Gréber's gardens at Edward and Eva Stotesbury's Whitemarsh Hall takes account of Pennsylvania's gentle topography. An aerial view shows terraces falling in orderly fashion from left to right, while the 700-ft.-long main axis runs from the house to the circular fountain beyond the *tapis vert*. The sightline continues out over the park fountain to the horizon.

Whitemarsh Valley, which stretched out for miles. This grand Louis-the-Fourteenth Versailles-type style "was mostly for newcomers," my Old Philadelphian source adds, meaning *their makers weren't Old Philadelphians*. Of course, with time, the families of those flush gardenmakers with names like Widener and McFadden also were transformed, just like their eighteenth-century merchant predecessors with names like Biddle, Clothier, and Willing.

The Stotesburys celebrated the completion of Whitemarsh Hall with a colossal party in 1921, to which *le tout* Philadelphia was invited. One French visitor described what he saw as "une sorte de Marly américaine," recalling Louis XIV's elegant playground in the hunting forest of Marly. The 283-foot-long house had been designed by architect Horace Trumbauer (1869–1938), unsung hero of the palace style in America. He worked with the first licensed black architect in this country, Julian Abele (1881–1950). The gardens were the work of a young Frenchman, Jacques-André-Auguste Gréber (1882–1962), who came to America to make gardens for the very rich, lapping the severe and correct stone cubes of their French-style houses in rich *parterres de broderie*.

Gréber, a 1908 graduate in architecture

of the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, was the son of the French sculptor, Henri Leon Gréber, whose gilded statues ornamented many of the gardens his son designed. At Whitemarsh Hall, Gréber's gardens were magical, cascading in a flight of terraces down to a 500-foot *tapis vert* that eventually terminated against the horizon of the 300-acre property. The soft white sprays and tall *jets d'eau* of many fountains added music and lightness to the immovable geometry of green, stone and bedding-out plants. Seventy gardeners were needed to keep the place in perfect order. Boxwoods transplanted from the gardens of Jerome Bonaparte at Woodbury, in Maryland, vied for attention with eighteenth-century French garden sculptures. The best of them was given to the Philadelphia Museum of Fine Art by Eva Stotesbury in memory of her husband. Today, all that remains of Whitemarsh Hall, which was bulldozed for development in 1985, are those statues: the "Bacchantes" of Clodion, twined with fruit and flowers (the matching pair is in the Musée des Arts Decoratifs in Paris) and the "Four Seasons," attributed to Pajou and purchased by the Stotesburys from a Versailles dealer in 1922.

All the palace gardens are gone. "Où sont les neiges d'antan?"\*\* asks the poet

François Villon. There's little left to preserve the fleeting memory of French gardens around Philadelphia. But despite the strictures of the Bush-Browns, seventeenth-century French style did sneak in to leave its mark on the heart of the Quaker City. The Benjamin Franklin Parkway was commissioned by Stotesbury and designed by Jacques Gréber, who was as good a progressive urbanist as he was a reactionary landscape architect. The parkway represents a different vision of city planning from William Penn's straightforward green squares and street grids; it introduced Philadelphians to the joys of a sophisticated circulation system, radial geometry, *ronds points* and the flying leap of axial views. So Philadelphia has its French secret, just the way Villandry has a Philadelphian at the heart of it all.

\*\*\*"Where are the snows of yesteryear."

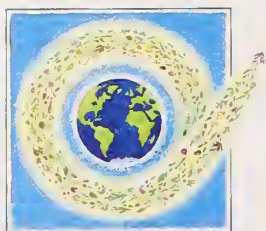
### Reading List

- \* *E.I. du Pont, Botaniste: The Beginning of a Tradition*, Norman B. Wilkinson, Eleutherian Mills-Hagley Foundation, Greenville, Delaware, 1972.
- \* *The Golden Age of American Gardens: Proud Owners, Private Estates, 1890–1940*, Mac Griswold and Eleanor Weller, Harry N. Abrams, New York, 1991.
- Les Jardins*, André and Paul Vera, Emile-Paule Freres, Paris, 1919.
- The Twilight of Splendor*, James T. Maher, Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1975.
- \* "Villandry — The People, not the Potager," Gillian Mawrey, *Hortus* #17, Spring, 1991.

\* Available to members through the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society library.

Mac Griswold, author of *Pleasures of the Garden, Images from the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (1987) and *The Golden Age of American Gardens* (1991), with Eleanor Weller, is currently at work on a book about George Washington's gardens and landscape at Mount Vernon. Her articles and reviews have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The New York Times Book Review*, *Vogue*, *Hortus*, *Antiques*, *Landscape Architecture*, *Design Quarterly*, *The Times Literary Supplement*, *House & Garden*, *Travel and Leisure*, *Southern Accents* and *Garden Design*, where she is a contributing editor.





# The Mother Tongue

Influence and Interchange between Britain and Gardens of the Delaware Valley

by Judith C. McKeon

*"The modern tradition which is evolving has not yet crystallized, but certain trends can be discerned and to see them at their clearest, we should look to Northern Europe on the one hand and to America on the other."*

—Sylvia Crowe (English landscape architect),  
*Garden Design*, Garden Art Press, Suffolk, UK, 1981

At Doe Run Farm the Gertrude Jekyll-style herbaceous borders feature *Verbena peruviana*, *Achillea millefolium*, and *Salvia sclarea* in early summer.  
photo by Jane Grushow





I admit it. I'm an Anglophile. I love British gardens. Like the mother tongue, it is difficult to garden in the Delaware Valley or anywhere else in the English-speaking world without reference to Britain. British tradition is an integral part of many gardens in the Delaware Valley. Just as the English language is spoken by millions in North America and patterned to our uses and then exported to Britain through films and other media, the Anglo-American gardening influence is not one way, but has always been a great exchange. Perhaps the expansion of the British empire was motivated by a depauperized flora. Certainly, ever since William Penn established Penn's Woods, the rich diversity of our native American plants as well as exotic flora from around the globe, have been collected

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***The Victorian landscape garden exemplified by the Morris Arboretum is above all an eclectic piece of Americana that preserves the Delaware Valley Quaker tradition of gardening, education, and research.***

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to embellish British gardens.

British gardening trends typically flood the American market with popular styles, books, and the latest fashionable plants, but during the past 25 years the tide has begun to turn. Today, American management techniques, technology, and science significantly contribute to the success of both American and British gardens. This article explores the ideas, gardening trends, and technology that influence an Anglo-American dialogue and ultimately contribute to dynamic gardens on both sides of the Atlantic.

Some fundamental influences on 20th century gardening trends can be traced to Britain and the Irish-born plantsman William Robinson, who invented modern gardening as we practice it. The forebear of modern planting design, Robinson gardened and wrote about gardening in England for nearly a century (1838-1935). A consummate horticulturist, he championed informality and rebelled against the popular custom of Victorian carpet bedding of tender plants. Robinson was above all an opinionated pragmatist, and he sharply criticized the expensive, labor-intensive gardening with hardy perennials, bulbs, shrubs, and trees, and he schooled us in the right use of them. Robinson grew an enormous variety of hardy plants including



At the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania the Gertrude Jekyll tradition can be seen in the rock wall garden installed as a terracing device, which encloses the rose garden and provides seasonal displays of alpine plants.

British natives with careful attention to their cultural requirements and planted them in broad, simple masses. Right plant, right place. Sound familiar?

It's all in Robinson's book *The English Flower Garden*, first published in 1883 and reprinted 16 times (William Robinson, John Murray, London, 3 ed., 1893). An overview of topics discussed is like a quick browse through the titles in the gardening section of Borders Bookstore: landscape gardening, design in planting, the architect in the garden, beauty in form: foliage effects, naturalizing bulbs, the wild garden, the garden in winter, borders of hardy flowers, rock and wall gardens, the hardy fern garden, the natural bog garden, water gardens, climbers and their artistic use, walks and edgings, new and rare plants.

Both Robinson and his successor Gertrude Jekyll popularized a relaxed cottage gardening style, the use of old-fashioned roses, and woodland gardening with shade-tolerant plants. Through the wide appeal of her books, Gertrude Jekyll carried on the Robinson tradition. She is also responsible for herbaceous border worship wherever that occurs on the planet. Today, we may reject herbaceous borders in favor of mixed gardens, but her theories of plant groupings and color schemes have impacted all serious gardeners on both sides of the Atlantic. And even if we digest her ideas through secondary sources or visit gardens that exemplify her themes, only to reject them, most of us owe Jekyll a nod of acknowledgement.

Although many of the gardens designed in her partnership with architect Edwin Lutyens are gone, the Robinson-Jekyll tradition was translated by a new generation of great garden makers in Britain during the first half of the 20th century. Of

particular importance for contemporary gardeners are Hidcote created by an American, Lawrence Johnston in the Cotswolds and the garden at Sissinghurst Castle in Kent made through the partnership of Vita Sackville-West and Harold Nicolson. The impact of these plant collectors' gardens cannot be underestimated. Both of these gardens are unified by a classic design that frames the garden as open-air rooms or enclosures filled with a rich variety of plants. These National Trust gardens are among the most visited and photographed gardens in Britain and they represent a popular English sensibility and style that has inspired and influenced garden making on both sides of the Atlantic.

### ***Doe Run, Morris Arboretum and Chanticleer***

This British legacy is a prominent feature of many gardens in the Delaware Valley. At Doe Run Farm, the splendid country garden of Sir John Thouron in Chester County, we might read Jekyll's *Gardens for Small Country Houses* (Gertrude Jekyll, Country Life, England, 1912, or Lawrence Weaver, Antique Collectors' Club, 1981), which illustrates herbaceous borders, alpine gardens, rock walls, and woods. Here is an example of a gardener prominently engaged in the great exchange with Britain, where ideas and plants freely traverse the Atlantic. Sir John Thouron was born of an American father and a Scottish mother and some plants have been brought from Scotland to embellish lush, artful gardens on his Brandywine estate.

Known for his fabulous perennial island beds, a kin to those at Bloom's of Bressingham, but echoing William Robinson, Sir John Thouron freely exchanges perennial plants with that great plantsman, Alan



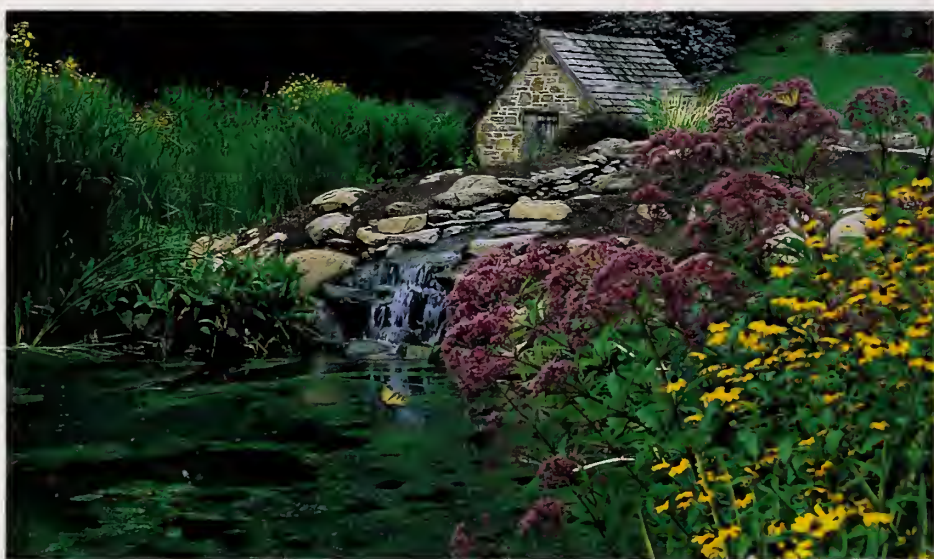


At the Morris Arboretum a cottage garden of old roses and perennials reflects the influence of Sissinghurst.



Chanticleer director Christopher Woods embodies a synthesis of British legacy with American brashness. "In America if you want to explore new ideas you can."

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At Chanticleer in Wayne, Pa., summer flowers of natives *Rudbeckia triloba* and *Eupatorium maculatum*, planted in sweeps around the pond create a bold, naturalistic effect as if they might have occurred by chance.

Bloom. His pollarded willows, like the stilt garden at Hidcote, hail from Savill gardens in Windsor. And yet the landscape of the Brandywine countryside, reminiscent of a Wyeth painting, extolls this American landscape with its rolling hills, rich pasture, woods, pond, and meadows. Nestled in the heart of the Delaware Valley, emblematic of its long tradition of great gardens with many ties to Britain, Doe Run Farm takes its place as a remarkable American country garden with a British flare.

At the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania, the English Romantic landscape of the 18th century reigns. It is clear that Lydia Morris was reading Gertrude Jekyll's articles in *Country Life* magazine as well as her books when she set out to detail gardens at Compton in the style popularized by Jekyll at the turn of the century. The Jekyll tradition can be seen in the rock wall garden installed as a terracing device, which encloses the rose garden and provides seasonal displays of rock plants that carpet the dry stone wall. In addition, the Morris's laid out an English-style double herbaceous border adjacent to the orange balustrade (now gone but soon to be revived).

More recently, the development of a cottage garden of old roses and perennials acknowledges the influence of Sissinghurst, and a mixed double border that displays a summer color theme of bronze foliage highlighted with red flowers, fondly footnotes Hidcote. And yet the Victorian landscape garden exemplified by the Morris Arboretum is above all an eclectic piece of Americana that preserves the Delaware Valley Quaker tradition of gardening, education, and research.

In the Delaware Valley, we may look to Chanticleer for a synthesis of the British legacy with American brashness. A synthesis embodied not only in its garden, but in the soul of its director, Christopher Woods. Trained in the British system and baptized by our continental winters and tropical summers, Woods vibrantly fuses tradition with modern irreverence in his approach to gardening. Originally the estate of the Rosengarten family, Chanticleer, a public garden, is a picturesque English-style landscape garden located in Wayne, Pa. It is a garden that embraces both the independent spirit and the radical climate of the Delaware Valley (Zone 6b: -15°F to 100°F).

Today under Woods's leadership, the garden incorporates a creative fusion. From bold, broad brush strokes of color to subtle naturalistic effects, Chanticleer brings together a sophisticated palette of plants characteristic of British gardens, but com-



bined with a daring, even wild American fervor. Woods does nothing by halves. There is attention to detail, and the art is concealed; so that, for example, an effective display of 75,000 daffodils descending to the stream looks completely natural, and summer flowers of *Rudbeckia triloba* planted in sweeps around the pond might have occurred by chance. William Robinson would love this garden.

Chanticleer offers a unique series of garden experiences. The Norman-style

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*Trained in the British system and baptized by our continental winters and tropical summers, Christopher Woods, director of Chanticleer, vibrantly fuses tradition with modern irreverence in his approach to gardening. Originally the estate of the Rosengarten family, Chanticleer, a public garden, is a picturesque English-style landscape garden located in Wayne, Pa.*

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manor house complete with courtyard garden and formal parterres is treated with Mediterranean flair replete with lush tropical urn displays perfectly compatible with hot, dry, humid summers in the Delaware Valley. Below the manor house, parterred mixed beds with an Anglo-American flavor provide bloom in soft to riotous colors throughout the season, while woodland, meadows, rock outcroppings, bog, and streamside gardens offer both bold and subtle displays. Garden ornamentation is done in organic simplicity with handcrafted wood sculptures: carved gates, garden seats, polished benches, and pergolas trained with vines. While pairs of brightly painted Adirondak chairs, nestled into the landscape, echo seasonal color displays and function as useful follies. All of the handsome wood pieces of garden furniture are made by Chanticleer staff.

From private estate to public garden, Chanticleer illustrates an emerging style that is fresh and lively in its undaunted experimentation. Woods defines an important distinction between British and American gardens. "There is a lot of sameness in Britain, whereas our gardens are different. This is a country of extreme geographic diversity and that may be the key to the difference between Britain and the United States. In America, if you want to explore new ideas you can." The most plucky of Delaware Valley gardens, Christopher Woods is developing Chanticleer with a refreshing fusion of Anglo-American ideas

## The Great Exchange with Britain: People, Technology, and Science

Exporting American science and technology to Britain over the past 25 years has impacted horticultural practices in the fields of turf maintenance, weed control, nursery management, plant recordkeeping, and arboriculture. For example, sophisticated groundskeeping machinery such as the Toro Groundsmaster riding mower and other labor-saving equipment developed in the American agricultural industry has affected garden maintenance on both sides of the Atlantic. In addition, modern plant recordkeeping was revolutionized by the development of the computer programs BG-base and BG-map pioneered at the Arnold Arboretum and Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania respectively, and this technology is now making inroads into British gardens including Hillier's Arboretum (Romsey, Hants, England) and others. And scientific research conducted by Dr. Alex Shigo for the U.S. Forest Service in the 1970s and '80s has had a dramatic impact on the practice of arboriculture internationally. The research of Shigo and others has fundamentally changed ideas of tree care over the past 25 years.

One of the best ways to share new ideas and practices is through internships and exchange programs. Like other botanic gardens, the Morris Arboretum conducts a free exchange of people, ideas, and gardening techniques with Britain. Paul Meyer, the director of the Morris Arboretum, initiated the Arboretum's lively exchange program with his own internship at Hillier's Arboretum in 1973. He later interned at Wisley, and also earned a certificate in botany from the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh in 1987.

During the last 25 years, the Morris Arboretum's interchange became institutionalized with the establishment of an internship program under the tutelage of the late Bill Klein in 1980; as well as staff-led garden tours to Britain; and staff exchanges with several British gardens including the Royal Botanic

Garden Edinburgh, Royal Botanic Garden Kew, the Royal Horticultural Society's Wisley Garden, and Hillier's Arboretum.

Close ties between the Morris Arboretum and British gardens have been maintained and strengthened in recent years through graduates of the internship program. British horticulturist Mike Buffin and Carla Thomas, an American, completed the Morris Arboretum internship in 1991. The couple married in Britain and took positions at Hillier's Arboretum, where Buffin was recently appointed curator, while Thomas serves as an education coordinator. Another member of the Hillier's staff, English horticulturist Duncan Goodwin, worked in greenhouse operations at the Morris Arboretum in 1994-95 before filling the post of propagator at Hillier's Arboretum.

In addition, relationships developed with the arboriculture staff of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh created an atmosphere of shared practices between the two institutions and fostered staff development through exchange programs. In the 1980s British arboriculture students began applying to the Morris Arboretum in greater numbers as ties with Britain increased. Six British students have interned in arboriculture and carried their training back to British gardens. Today, Colin Belton, who completed the arborist internship in 1990 is on staff at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, while the 1995-96 arborist intern Marilyn Kumon serves as an arborist at Kew. When the devastating hurricane struck gardens in southern England toppling thousands of trees in 1987, the Morris Arboretum arborist team including a British arboriculture intern travelled to Kew to help with the clean up. These stories and stories like them throughout the Delaware Valley have a huge impact on gardening trends both here and abroad through the exchange of people and ideas with our British counterparts.

—Judith C. McKeon

that may lead the way into our fourth century of gardening.

Certainly we owe much to the British garden tradition that has enriched the Delaware Valley. However, just as the Mother tongue evolves and is spoken with distinct varieties of American English, our emerging garden styles will continue to grow into unique forms. And as American gardening trends, technology, and science begin to flow back to Britain, the Delaware

Valley plays an important role as a center for this great Anglo-American interchange.

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Judith C. McKeon is chief horticulturist and rosarian at the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania. She is the author of *Encyclopedia of Roses: An Organic Guide to Growing and Enjoying America's Favorite Flower*, Rodale Press, 1995, and *Gardening with Roses*, Friedman-Fairfax, 1997.



# GERMANY

*An American becomes a Master Gardener in Germany and returns to join the staff at*

 by Robert Herman

The Perennial Plant Association's 1997 Plant of the Year is *Salvia × sylvestris* 'May Night'. This robust plant with beautiful violet-blue flowers does not hail from England but from another country that is not readily identified with horticultural achievement. The real name for 'May Night' is 'Mainacht'; it was officially introduced in Germany in 1956 by Karl Foerster, an eminent horticulturist and philosopher. Curiously, in our country, where so many of us can claim German heritage and even practice many traditions of the old country, Germany's impact on American gardening has scarcely been acknowledged.

I lived in Europe for 10 years, seven of which were spent as the "Meister" for the Countess von Zeppelin perennial plant nursery in southwestern Germany. Nestled between the Black Forest and the Rhine River and surrounded by vineyards, it was an idyllic spot to work and provided a unique professional experience. The nursery is one of the oldest and most respected in Europe, with a vast selection of hardy perennials, and my association with the Countess brought me into contact with some of the foremost plantspeople in Europe. There are often great differences between the goals of the plant breeders and garden designers in Germany as compared to England.

One of the main reasons I decided to live in Germany was the interest in plants and the enthusiasm for gardening I had experienced there. It was a joy to see the village gardens and flowerboxes overflowing with flowers, and the beautifully landscaped public gardens and parks in the cities. Most towns have nurseries or greenhouses with trained gardeners and many have water trucks, all to maintain public plantings. Even Germans without land manage to create a garden in containers on balconies, and rooftop gardening is popular in urban areas. Large cities set aside land for gardeners to lease, sometimes with a little cottage; these areas are beehives of activity on weekends.

But what sets Germany apart from the rest of Europe and the world is the high priority placed on public horticulture. With the rebuilding after World War II, planners placed extreme importance on creating "green space" in urban and suburban areas.

Major parks were designed for the benefit and enjoyment of city dwellers who had scant space for their own gardens. This offered landscape architects an opportunity to introduce contemporary design concepts, and their ideas and approaches to the uses of plants have been evolving since then.

## *German garden shows*

One significant result of this trend was the development of the German garden show concept. Starting in 1951, federal

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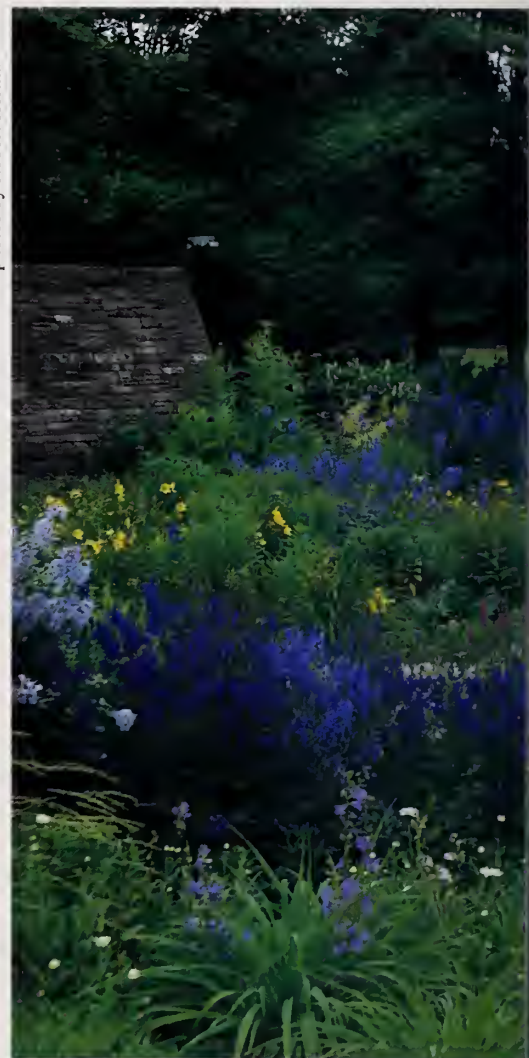
*What sets Germany apart from the rest of Europe and the world is the high priority placed on public horticulture. With the rebuilding after World War II, planners placed extreme importance on creating "green space" in urban and suburban areas.*

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garden shows have taken place every two years in a different city. The host city selects the show site and sets the criteria for an ideal park for its inhabitants and the best landscape architects in the country compete to design the show. All of this is done well in advance: trees are often planted five years before the show opens and perennials go in two to three years ahead of time. When the show actually opens, it runs from April into October and offers display and demonstration gardens, educational exhibits and lectures, art and entertainment. After the show is over, the city is left with a carefully planned and beautifully landscaped park, to be enjoyed for generations.

In addition to the federal shows, there are state shows and, every 10 years, the International Garden Show. These incorporate garden exhibits put on by numerous other countries, including China and Japan and can become colossal projects. The last international show, held in Stuttgart, was almost two miles long and monorail trains on a suspended track carried people to exhibitions. The city had even moved some of the streets to incorporate the design of the park. The Westpark in Munich, Planten and Bloemen in Hamburg and the Luisenpark in Mannheim have wonderful gardens that were created through garden shows.

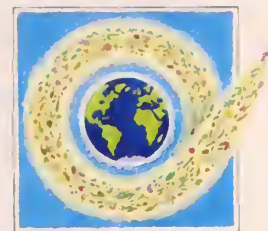
The gardens created in these parks are contemporary and may seem quite unusual



photos by Robert Herman

to gardeners used to traditional borders and plantings. Landscape architecture in Germany, and in Continental Europe in general, has been evolving along with the normal changes in style, architecture and philosophy that occur with time. English garden design has, for the most part, rested on the laurels of people like Gertrude Jekyll and Vita Sackville-West. Huge borders designed purely for aesthetics are so labor intensive that they simply are not suited to the modern gardener with a modest home. German designs are concerned with ecology and plant communities — selecting the right plant for the right place, in combinations one often sees in nature. They don't try to flatten out the property to create a





## White Flower Farm with an appreciation for the reciprocity of ideas and plants



International Garden Show perennial garden at Stuttgart, Germany, 1993. (Yes, those are farm animals in the pasture created as part of the Show.)



A typical Karl Foerster combination: *Rudbeckia fulgida* 'Goldsturm' with asters and ornamental grasses.

"bowling green" but are inspired by, and work with, changes in grade to show off plants to their best advantage.

Gardens with the family in mind frequently include small ponds because they create an ecosystem that attracts all forms of wildlife. Germans place a high value on nature and the environment, and they are convinced that working in the garden and interacting with plants are important to one's physical and spiritual well-being.

### Private gardens

German private gardens are small in comparison to American gardens but they are packed with plants. Vegetable gardens are just as popular as in the United States

but are intensely cultivated and many of the row covers and special training systems one now sees in gardening catalogs originated in Germany. I thought of producing the tomato spirals we used in our German vegetable garden until I saw that an American company was already importing them. Most households apply organic methods of raising foods and Rudolf Steiner's biodynamic gardening has a strong following. Practically every German home has a few fruit trees for fresh-eating, canning and the Christmas rumtopf — fruit layered and preserved with a potent rum.

With the Alps close by, rock garden plants are extremely popular, in gardens and troughs. In fact, one sees every imagin-

able type of plant in a variety of containers. Sempervivums are the choice for strawberry jars. Brugmansia and oleanders are favorites for large pots outdoors. Flower boxes are everywhere and planted in artistic combinations, rarely arranged symmetrically. A flower box may change with the seasons — pansies or tulips in the spring, a mix of annuals in the summer, heather in the fall and evergreen boughs in the winter. Container gardening is enjoying a worldwide increase in popularity. Perhaps because one can experience the rewards of gardening without the planning, digging, weeding and other tasks that some new to gardening would call "work."

The German equivalent of an English





**Top left:** Bauerngarten with boxwood hedges, vegetables, annuals and flowerboxes. **Top right:** *Achillea* 'Feuerland' ('Fireland') from Ernst Pagels. **Bottom:** *Papaver orientale* 'Turkenlouis' from Helene von Stein-Zeppelin.

cottage garden is the charming, old-fashioned "Bauerngarten." This translates literally as "farm garden" but they are characteristic of many homes in rural villages that are no longer the homes of working farmers. In recent years, farm

gardens are being copied or recreated in suburban gardens as younger generations leave the villages and long for the country life again. The traditional farm garden is made up of beds in formal geometrical shapes but the garden holds a hodgepodge

of herbs and vegetables, medicinal plants, brightly colored annuals and time-honored perennials such as peonies, irises, tall phlox, larkspurs and bleeding hearts. Roses or a rose standard often hold a prominent place. The bauerngarten was always under the



care of the woman of the house who turned to it not only for food and medicine but for cut flowers to adorn the house and fill it with their fragrance.

### **Plant breeders**

Plant breeders in Germany have also had goals or priorities that seem to be in tune with contemporary American trends, and the history of perennial plant selection is directly related to North America. Although the beauty of the plant plays a dominant role, the German plantsperson tends to place more value on plants with year-round interest: the flowers may be followed by glowing fall foliage and lacy seed heads in winter. Their selections are usually disease-resistant, robust and compact and require little pinching or staking. It is no coincidence that many of the perennials arriving here from Germany are selections of our own native plants. Europeans were looking for something new and exotic yet sturdy and vigorous, and North America had an immense palette of plants to choose from. Today, the movement to return to using native plants is just as strong in Germany as it is in the United States.

Although quite a bit has been written about the major English horticulturists, one rarely hears of the prominent contributors to gardening on the Continent. Foremost among Germans was the philosopher and master plantsman, Karl Foerster (1874-1970). At his nursery in Bornim, near Berlin, Foerster developed and introduced hundreds of cultivars of perennials, specializing in *Delphinium*, *Phlox*, *Heliopsis* and asters. Perhaps an even more important legacy is the more than 30 books he wrote between 1922 and 1968. His writing not only provided excellent cultural information but also had an almost mystical quality about it, when communicating his love of plants and gardening to the reader. This poetic writing style is extremely difficult to translate. I think that may be why none of his books have been printed in English. With his book, *Einzug der Graeser und Farne* (Entry of Grasses and Ferns into Gardens), published in 1957, he was largely responsible for the introduction of ornamental grasses into perennial gardening.

Foerster was also an accomplished garden designer who knew not only how to combine plants on the basis of color and texture, but also according to their cultural requirements. The combination of ornamental grasses, rudbeckias, and *Sedum* 'Herbstfreude' ('Autumn Joy') made popular in America in recent years was created in Karl Foerster's gardens over 30 years ago. One sees Foerster's influence in the designs of German-born Wolfgang Oehme and his partner James van Sweden (design-

ers based in Washington, D.C.), who lived in Europe for some time as well.

Another preeminent perennial plantsman was Georg Arends (1863-1952). In contrast to Foerster, whose new introductions resulted from selection, Arends was a practical, skilled plant breeder who made specific crosses to achieve his goals. He became internationally famous for his work with astilbes, the *Astilbe* *×arendsii* hybrids, and many of these remain unsurpassed in their beauty and vigor. Arends is also well-known for the *Bergenia*, *Phlox*, *Saxifraga* and primrose cultivars he introduced, but

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I'm sure he never would have imagined that his *Sedum* 'Herbstfreude' would later be found in practically every city and town in the United States. Sadly, the nursery was completely destroyed in the war.

In 1950, Arends wrote a small book entitled *Mein Leben als Gaertner und Zuechter* (My Life as Gardener and Breeder). His family built up the nursery again and today it is managed by his granddaughter, Ursula Maubach Arends and her daughter, Anja Maubach. Anja is also a talented designer and has created some spectacular perennial borders at the nursery in Wuppertal, near Duesseldorf.

The tradition of perennial plant breeding in German nurseries is being carried on today by such notable plantsmen as Ernst Pagels. A vegetarian and pacifist who lives a rather spartan-style life, he seems to have an uncanny sense for finding and selecting wonderful new perennial plants. Karl Foerster once handed the young Ernst a packet of seed and told him to see what he could find in it. From those seeds he selected *Salvia nemorosa* 'Ostfriesland' ('East Friesland'), which is the name of the area where the nursery is located. Pagels went on to introduce several other salvias, including *S. ×sylvestris* 'Blauhügel' ('Blue Hill'), a true blue that blooms a month later than the other perennial salvias. He is probably best known in Germany for the numerous *Miscanthus* cultivars he has developed. Among the best are 'Graziella', 'Kaskade', 'Kleine Fontaine', 'Malepartus',

and 'Silberspinne' but there are another 25 to choose from. Kurt Bluemel has been instrumental in bringing Pagel's selections to America. Ernst Pagels has moved on to the genus *Achillea*, and the bright red 'Feuerland' ('Fireland') and pastel yellow 'Credo' are two hybrids of his, with strong stems that stand up well.

The Countess von Zeppelin is famous for her work with oriental poppies and her goal was to select for compactness as well as beauty; it saddened her to find the delicate flowers fallen over and splattered with mud. *Papaver orientale* 'Kleine Tanzerin' ('Little Dancer') is a petite plant with stems of steel and 'Turkenlouis', with large, shocking red flowers with fringed petals and sturdy stems are two good examples of her success. Both are available in this country.

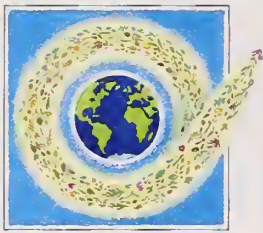
Of course there are hundreds of German books on plants and gardening written by experts in every field of horticulture. Luckily, they are becoming available to the English-speaking gardeners of the world. *Hardy Herbaceous Perennials*, the masterwork from Leo Jelitto and Wilhelm Schacht, is an encyclopedia of information and *Perennials and Their Habitats* by Hansen and Stahl is a concise guide to finding the proper plant for every situation. Fritz Koehlein's books on irises, saxifrages and gentians provide specific information on these genres to the plant fanatic.

I've tried to show how the history, development and future of German and American gardening are bound together. Container and water gardening, long popular in Europe, are now taking hold in the United States. German tools, seeds and books are found in American garden centers and catalogs, in steadily increasing numbers. In both countries, planners and designers are calling for the use of more native plants in natural-looking landscapes. German plant breeders adopted North American species over a half a century ago and just now they are returning to us as lovely yet rugged garden plants. Because I have had the opportunity to work as a horticulturist in both countries, I see how much more American gardeners and designers could benefit if we seriously started looking to Continental Europe for information, innovative ideas and new design concepts.



Robert Herman is a recognized "Gaertnermeister" and the only American ever to serve on the German Committee for the Evaluation of Perennial Plants. In 1994, he returned to the United States to join the staff of White Flower Farm. A former member of the horticulture and education staffs at the Missouri Botanical Garden, he has taught and lectured at Arnold Arboretum and Radcliffe College.





# Japanese Gardens

The Possibilities for Delaware Valley Gardens

 by Claire Sawyers

photo by Paul Meyer



Japanese-style rock work in the interior of the Dorrance H. Hamilton Fernery at the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania, which includes a naturalistic mountain, water cascade and pools. The fernery was first constructed in 1899 by Lydia and John Morris's Japanese gardeners. The rockery was carefully protected during the 1994 restoration, and its appearance today is virtually unchanged from the original.



*The underlying principles of Japanese garden design offer new ways of thinking about garden design.*

Probably just about every residential garden in the Delaware Valley contains plants native to Japan. *Pachysandra terminalis*, a reliable evergreen ground cover, *Pieris japonica* a striking broad-leaved evergreen, and Japanese maples with their delicate cut and crimson leaves are all plants known and widely grown. Certainly the flora of Japan has had an obvious impact on our gardens for more than a century, but using Japanese plants in our gardens is not the same as embracing the Japanese garden aesthetic or style of gardening. What impact has the style of Japanese gardens had? In trying to answer this question, it's useful to think about what exposure the general population in this region has had to the Japanese garden aesthetic.

One of the first Japanese gardens Philadelphians were exposed to on a broad scale was in 1876 when one was displayed at the Centennial Exhibition held in Fairmount Park. Plants and landscape and architectural styles from 56 countries and 26 of the 37 states and territories were represented. The Japanese style had not been seen in this country on any kind of scale before this exhibition. In a day before television and computers, exhibits like the Centennial Exhibition, showing exotic plants, foreign objects and objects of art as well as the latest technology, had tremendous influence on the populace in setting horticultural trends and directing architectural fashion.

John Morris, who created the gardens of the Morris Arboretum, with his sister Lydia, was influenced by the Centennial. In 1887 John and Lydia took a trip to Japan. John Morris had a tea house built in Tokyo in 1891 and rebuilt on the grounds of their estate, then called "Compton." They employed Japanese gardeners on several projects; Sato made a garden in the "Woods," and in 1902 Furi Kawa made a Japanese rock pond. The Morrises later employed a fine Japanese garden designer, Mr. Muto, who created for them the "Hill and Cloud" garden in 1905, and the "Japanese Overlook" in 1912. While much of this work is no longer evident at the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania, extraordinary Japanese-style rock work done in 1899-1900 is beautifully preserved in the restored fernery.

The same piece of ground that introduced Philadelphians to the Japanese style of



Early spring at the Japanese House and Garden, The Pine Breeze Villa, in Fairmount Park. The house was constructed in Japan in 1953 and moved to the Museum of Modern Art for two years; then moved to Philadelphia in 1958. Only about 300 Shoins were built; these are an upperclass-style of house, inhabited by princes, warlords, abbots or priests. The garden was designed as a viewing garden to be seen from the house; a small garden, it appears about 1/3 as large as it actually is. The design creates the illusion of size, through using dwarf varieties — e.g. a maple, 3 ft. tall, is pruned to appear as an 8-ft. maple. Pruning makes the trees appear more mature than they are. The 5-ft. bridge railings are 6 in. tall but the mind's eye sees them as full size.

gardening more than a century ago at the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition, continues to do so today. This site is now home to Shofuso, the Pine Breeze Villa, a 17th century-style Japanese house, more commonly known simply as the Japanese House and Garden in Fairmount Park. The current garden was designed by Sano Tansai in 1958 when the House was given to Philadelphia by the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. In 1976 as a part of Philadelphia's Bicentennial celebrations, the garden was extensively renovated by Nakajima Kenji. Today it is maintained by the Friends of the Japanese House and Garden.

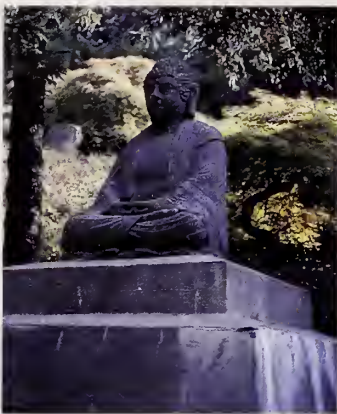
Other gardens, sites, and structures in the Delaware Valley educate the public about Japanese design and expose them to the Japanese design aesthetic. At Haverford College the Gertrude Chatin Teaf Memorial Garden was added to the campus-arboretum in 1988. This courtyard garden, associated with the dining center, was

designed by Japanese landscape designer Hiroshi Makita drawing upon traditional Zen garden ideals. At Longwood Gardens, a collection of bonsai displayed year-round in the conservatories, illustrates this Japanese horticultural art-form, which trains young and small plants to look like ancient natural forest trees.

At a property known as Swiss Pines in Charlestown, Pa., gardens designed by Katsuo Saito, a Japanese contemporary landscape architect, are open for public enjoyment. This site has been developed since 1957 by Arnold Bartschi who gave 19 acres to a foundation for the study and appreciation of horticulture. In New Hope, Pennsylvania, Eastern and Western cultures blend at the studio complex developed by the late George Nakashima, the internationally celebrated furniture maker who created western-style furniture with a Japanese sense of craftsmanship and sensitivity for material.

Getting back to the question of what





**Above:** A Japanese statue enhances the serenity at Swiss Pines in Charlestown. **At right:** Swiss Pines. The elements in a Japanese garden invite pauses, offer places for reflection. Each corner offers a new perspective, a journey of discovery as different views are revealed.



impact the Japanese garden has had on gardening in the Delaware Valley: The influence of Japanese culture on our everyday life is easy to see on some levels. I can run into Genuardi's grocery store and pick up ready-made sushi for lunch any day of the week now (and frequently do). But has Japanese design influenced residential gardens in the region? It is just about as easy to go to a garden center in this region and pick out a Japanese garden ornament, such as a stone lantern or wash basin, as it is to get sushi these days, but adding a Japanese object to your garden and saying it's a Japanese garden is like putting a *tansu* (chest) in your house and saying it's a Japanese house. While incorporating Japanese objects into gardens may be an obvious influence that is frequently seen, it's a superficial one. The real question is, have the principles that characterize and underline the nature of Japanese garden design played a role in garden design in the region today?

### **Characteristics that define Japanese gardens**

To answer that, I need to characterize Japanese gardens and since gardening has evolved in Japan for centuries, that isn't easy to do. Many different periods of gardening occurred in Japan resulting in different styles, but in some way common characteristics or underlying principles carry through different kinds of Japanese gardens whether it's a small pebble and stone composition or a large stroll garden centered around a lake. These are characteristics I think define Japanese gardens; these are the traits I think someone has in

mind when s/he says "I'd like to have a Japanese garden."

First and foremost Japanese gardens express a reverence for nature and look to mother nature as the master gardener. The elements of the natural landscapes in Japan are equally important in Japanese gardens: rock, water and plants. To Westerners, it's nearly impossible to imagine a garden without plants, while in Japan there are gardens devoid or almost devoid of plants and composed primarily of rocks or water because these elements are such important aspects of the natural landscape. And because Japanese gardeners model the plants in their gardens on the picturesque ones mother nature has produced, very different horticultural practices have evolved in Japan compared to the ones we learn in gardening classes and courses here. For example, it's not uncommon in a Japanese nursery or garden to see weights or rocks tied to the branches of trees to pull them down. This creates a plant that looks older than it is; it creates a plant that has the picturesque quality of a plant found in nature.

Similarly, pine trees in Japanese gardens will frequently be pruned to make them look older than they are. Old needles are removed to make the plant airy and open like the wind-blown mountain pines and the new growth, the so-called "candles" are broken in half before the needles expand to stunt growth and make the branching more picturesque.

Another example: frequently Japanese gardeners will intentionally plant a tree with the trunk **not** perpendicular to the ground. This horticultural technique makes

the plant look as though it has been shaped by time, leaning for light or falling due to erosion along a stream bed or pond edge.

The reverence for nature expressed in the Japanese garden also means they place importance on line and form, mass and texture and a balance of space much more than importance on color and bloom. Japanese gardens seem subtle, even spare with their moss carpets and occasional rock outcroppings compared to English perennial borders brimming with blooms. Gardeners here so frequently worry about someone visiting "when nothing is in bloom" or after peak bloom. It's as though we feel there's nothing else worthy of our attention in the garden besides flowers. Going hand-in-hand with the emphasis on form and line, Japanese gardens are four season gardens; gardeners strive to create gardens as beautiful in the winter as in the summer. Since the focus is not on bloom, Japanese gardens successfully accomplish this. Some of the most famous images of Japanese gardens are taken in winter after a snowfall.

When we think of what music is made of, we think of the notes, but the pauses between the notes are just as important as the notes themselves. The Japanese sense of space, as expressed in the garden, seems to be based on the understanding that the space between plants or the voids in the garden are like the silences in music. The cracks between stones in a Japanese garden walkway are just as important as the rocks themselves.

Inspired by nature, Japanese gardens are also characteristically asymmetrical. You could say they are the antithesis of tradi-



tional French gardens described elsewhere in this issue. Focal points are off center, groupings are of odd numbers — three, five or seven — paths are curved and meandering more like deer trails following the contour lines of the landscape than having anything to do with a grid, square or rectangle.

Part of the unique spirit found in Japanese gardens also stems from a reliance on humble, natural, and recycled materials that harmonize with nature. Discarded foundation stones are recycled as tea garden wash basins; old broken roof tiles embedded into a straw and mud stucco make up a garden wall; a section of a bamboo culm is fashioned into a water basin dipper. You won't find gilded metals and polished marble in the palette of materials used in a traditional Japanese garden. And you won't find wood or stone that have had their natural grain patterns obscured by paint.

Another important distinguishing trait of Japanese gardens results from seeing utilitarian objects in the garden as a means to add beauty. Walkways in Japanese gardens never seem like intrusions — they are a part of the art, part of the beauty. Frequently Japanese garden walkways are made of stone whether natural or masoned and laid out in myriad ways. I don't ever remember seeing asphalt or concrete in a traditional Japanese garden. Winter protection looks more like some kind of ceremonious tree decoration for the winter than an eyesore to be tolerated during the cold season. "Do not enter" signs are rocks tied with black twine and placed in the pathway. This is such an unobtrusive way of closing off a path, westerners have to be told the meaning of these rocks dressed like packages.

Another reason I believe westerners have been captivated by Japanese gardens is that they successfully integrate the inside with the outside; they marry the architecture with the garden so the garden seems to be ever-present even when you're inside. Verandas serve as hallways carrying people from room to room while exposing them to garden views. Shoji (sliding doors made of wooden frames covered with paper) almost function as picture frames setting off views into the garden. In many traditional Japanese gardens, in fact you only look at the garden from the building; you don't walk into the garden at all. The most famous Japanese garden — Ryoan-ji — is an example of this inside-outside relationship.

Finally, another characteristic that distinguishes Japanese gardens and is at the heart of their essence, I believe, is that they are engaging either physically or mentally or both. The stroll-style garden leads visitors on a sequence of experiences so a

garden visit becomes a journey of discovery as views and experiences are revealed around the garden. In such gardens it's not uncommon to cross on stepping stones set in water with no hand rails, which certainly causes you to become aware of the water, or to step over a massive root that crosses the path, causing you to break your step and look up at the tree connected to the root. Even in Japanese gardens you don't enter, such as Ryoan-ji, you become mentally engaged as you look from rock grouping to rock grouping and contemplate the balance between them and the starkness of the composition.

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***Adding a Japanese object to your garden and saying it's a Japanese garden is like putting a tansu (chest) in your house and saying it's a Japanese house.***

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Even viewing a path that disappears around a fence is engaging because it creates a sense of mystery: your mind wonders "Where does the path go?" There are countless ways Japanese gardens engage the senses and subtly dictate the experience of the visitor, which makes it hard not to be observant and focused on the garden or enveloped by it.

#### ***How we can implement these principles***

These principles — drawing inspiration from nature, placing an emphasis on space, form, and texture, using building materials that harmonize with nature, integrating the inside with the outside and engaging the visitor in the garden — I believe are all principles that can and perhaps should transcend the obvious cultural differences between Japanese and American gardens; however, I'd say the typical suburban Delaware Valley garden makes little use of these principles. Our gardening style has been largely shaped by the style of gardening imported from England and Europe, which explains our reliance on lawns, formality and symmetrical design, and our focus on color and bloom. I'm against copying great gardens — whether English, French, Italian, Chinese or Japanese — but learning from successful gardens by analyzing what it is that makes them great and then applying those principles to your own garden in a way that makes sense for your lifestyle is entirely appropriate.

This part of the country has beautiful natural areas — forests, meadows, and wetlands that can certainly serve as inspiration for garden making. And here, like Japan, where we experience four distinct

seasons, it's wholly appropriate to design for winter interest or to design a garden to be equally gratifying throughout the year so we do draw joy from looking at it year-round, even if plants aren't in bloom.

We also have beautiful local stone and wood that is decay- and pest-resistant, for instance Eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) and black locust (*Robinia pseudo-acacia*), which could serve as building material that harmonizes with the surroundings. We have picturesque artifacts and objects from our past that can be recycled in our gardens. For example, instead of using Japanese roof tiles we can use old slate from roofs as a recycled material. Instead of old Japanese foundation stones we could use old millstones.

There could be greater integration of American houses with their lots if we simply began to design for the person living in the house and not for the person looking at the house from the street. Moving plantings away from the foundation out to the edge of the property line, planning views from the inside out to the garden rather than covering up windows with overgrown plants and curtains are examples of how this approach could be applied in our gardens.

Many American residential gardens you can take in with a quick glance over the front yard and a quick look over the back yard — there is little to truly engage the viewer — all is revealed immediately. Realizing we can create a stroll experience around our house, by creating paths as opposed to expanses of lawn and creating distinct areas or special vignettes in the garden would do much to make our gardens more memorable and akin to the Japanese approach to landscaping. Dividing space with hedges, walls or fences not only makes the space feel bigger, but it does much to create a sense of discovery and of mystery as you pass through openings and find a new space.

Japan is a long way away from Philadelphia; the Japanese language is difficult for Americans to learn; and Westerners had little to no access to Japanese culture before Commodore Perry's arrival in Japan in 1853. That may in part explain why Japanese gardens have not had more of an influence on our style of gardens but certainly they have much to teach us.




Claire Sawyers is the director of the Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College. She lived in Japan for six years and later returned to work with a Japanese landscaper in Kyoto for three months.





# *All the World's a Muse*

*How we have come to create today's floral designs*

 by Cheryl Lee Monroe

**T**he area of my life where I most relish creativity is with flowers, flowers in my garden, but mostly fresh-cutflowers: incredible selections of flowers available from every corner of the world, as well as from our own gardens. I relish the possibilities that containers add, from glass jars to beautiful porcelain urns. Most of all, I am thirsty for color and rejoice over the ever-increasing boldness with which we can use it.

Our use of fresh flowers is based on a broad range of inspirations, not just selection, vases and color. Transportation and technology have brought us to a time when just about anything goes. As far back as 2000 B.C. the Egyptians and Greeks were sophisticated flower users, the Egyptians expressing their religious beliefs and later their prosperity with them. The Greeks were the first to experiment with self-government and their attitude towards freedom influenced their floral designs. The Greeks, like our current Ikebana flower arrangers, used balance and harmony as a guiding principle.


The Chinese, however, are credited with the first major floral influences and their designs are still steeped in tradition and a deep reverence for nature. The Japanese

who first copied the Chinese, quickly developed their own form of globally recognized floral art, Ikebana, which means Japanese flower arranging. Today, the goal of the many schools of design in Japan, each with its own masters, is to create harmony and balance, not unlike the Greeks.

Great Flemish painters in the 1600s gave us such lavish profusion we still emulate their style today. The abundance of flowers in their still life paintings, bursting with fruits, birds' nests and vegetables, was all mixed with no regard for season but with reverence for color and perfection in detail. Three hundred years later, worldwide access to flowers lets us disregard the seasons again, as countries like New Zealand offer us peonies in December.

Italy's growing regions give us beautiful anthuriums, orchids, carnations, and alstroemeria to name a few. Italy especially resonates through its classic architecture, bold warm colors and fine containers and glazes. The French bring to mind romance, passions, the joy of living. French mass arrangements have a style all their own, one we have long emulated in this country, striving to be lavish with a seeming disregard for rules — something the French





do well in addition to having an incredible knack for expressing jubilation. Today, however, the most avant garde designs in France are not mass designs but rather those influenced by Ikebana.

The British hold sway over our floral designs because they so greatly influence our gardens. Gertrude Jekyll, in the late 19th and early 20th century, acclaimed for her gardening vision, wrote lavishly about her floral designs. Constance Spry was an innovative designer in the 1940s who used unusual materials in her flower designs and her London flower shop set the trends. At the end of World War II, she started what came to be one of the best known schools for floral design. Sheila MacQueen, a chief demonstrator for the Constance Spry organization, followed in Spry's footsteps and dazzled the world from the 1960s on, creating designs for royal events including two weddings. Rosemary Verey, one of our most notable current influences, writes and teaches about flower arrangers' gardens as well as garden design. Each of these women has written books that contain invaluable information about the flowers we can grow and cut from our gardens.

### ***The rules allow arranging to flourish***

Flower arranging in America hit its stride after World War I. In the 1920s and '30s guidelines for floral designs were being written primarily for garden club arrangers. In the 1920s, the Philadelphia Flower Show noted that they "were fortunate to have the cooperation of the Garden Clubs of Philadelphia and vicinity." As consideration was given to how flowers were cut and displayed, rules and guidelines were needed.

Definitive styles began to develop around this time. The lines of the Asian arrangements meshed with the styles of the Continent to give us line and mass designs. Garden clubs were creating set patterns, strict rules and copying previously executed styles like the French mass, the cone shapes of the Byzantine era, the spare balance of Asia. Geometric forms dominated with the inverted T, crescents, ovals, symmetrical and asymmetrical, triangles and the well-known Hogarth curve.

Ralph Null, retired professor of floral design at Mississippi State University, credits the advent of rules and guidelines with the flourishing of floral design. He believes the rules enabled folks to feel confident enough to jump in and make flower arrangements. Club members began to ponder "What makes a good flower arrangement" and credit show schedules with broadening the scope of designs.

We've come a long way. Today's flower show schedules give latitude to creativity. In the 1998 Philadelphia Flower Show Exhibitor's Guide the Table Class description entices: "French Provincial." A table to reflect one of the spectacular provinces of France." No set style, no geometric designs, just imagination.

As the 20th century wore on, by the 1950s and '60s folks began to feel restricted by the rules that had freed them three decades earlier. "With so many constraints," wondered Betty Belcher in *Creative Flower Arranging*, "is it any wonder all the designs were woefully similar." Floral designers were seeking new ideas with a passion. Designs that lived too much by the rules were starting to look tortured or worse — boring.

Flowers and foliage, from figs to tulips, have their own power to influence our designs, to guide our hands and knives with the simple elegance of their shapes and colors.

photo by Langdon Clay from *Madderlake Flowers Rediscovered* by Tom Pritchard, Bill Jarecki, Alan Boehmer, Stewart Tabori and Chang, N.Y., 1985.





**Above:** Ikebana, the Japanese art of floral design, is the ultimate study in harmony, in balance. Each component is carefully chosen and placed, magnifying nature's brilliance and speaking to us as the art should. This arrangement was part of the Philadelphia Flower Show's Ikebana International, Philadelphia Chapter #71 1997 exhibit. **At right:** Your flower design will be strongly determined by the flowers gathered from your garden. The strong colors of summer bloomers like zinnias, marigolds and rudbeckias will give you arrangements that will sing with the pure strength of their colors.



Containers and mechanics, the guts that hold the flowers together, also played a large role in what we were creating; they still do. For much of history vases were our primary containers and mechanics were wire and pincushion holders. In the 1940s oasis (Floral Foam®), a product of the rubber industry, came on the market and possibilities abounded. We could tuck oasis in any bowl or shoe, into a tree trunk or on the ceiling and shove in the flowers. Vases were out, bowls, from soup to urns, long or low, were in. One of the challenges midway through this century was that we still had only a small selection of stiff-stemmed flowers to design with. Chrysanthemums,

carnations, snapdragons, roses, irises and lilies had straight stems and predominated. Put stiff flowers and bowls together and you have those round mounds of flowers we came to know and dread.

Thankfully, vases are chic once more; I see them everywhere. Their shapes and colors seem limitless, in sizes from diminutive to immense. For many years, yard sales and flea markets were the best places to find vases. Now designers haunt kitchen shops for great glasses to hold the array of flowers we now have available.

#### *The world as one marketplace*

Today we can have any flower, from any

place, almost any time of the year. Sue Wilds, owner of Wild Flowers, a wholesale flower house in Chichester, Pennsylvania, enthusiastically ticks off the great flowers she sees every day in her work and concludes "The world truly is one marketplace, there is nothing we cannot get from anywhere."

New Zealand exports gorgeous blue, amethyst and white hydrangea, cut water lilies and to the delight of the ghosts of great Flemish artists, those peonies we can now get in December. South Africa sends us proteas, pincushions in bright yellow to high gold and brilliant reds. South Africa's Cape greens are foliages, nothing like



baker's fern, and other interesting flowers that are simply knobs, balls and bumps.

Ecuador, snuggled next to the equator and with perfectly consistent growing conditions, gives us some of the largest headed roses possible in fantastic new colors and fragrances. One of the newest roses is a garden type with a high petal count. Bred to open fully when it arrives, it will stay luscious in a vase for days.

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**Ralph Null credits Martha Stewart with making folks comfortable with the everyday use of flowers. Before Martha and magazines, flowers were most often used for celebrations and ceremony.**

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The Dutch continue to amaze us with both quality and varieties, reaching ever deeper into their bags of innovations for incredible bulbs and colors. The Dutch are venturing into California, growing incredible items like *Delphinium* 'Princess Caroline', so enormous one stem can be 8 in. across.

At home our best growing venture might turn out to be the specialty cut flower growers. They grow the more fragile items, flowers we more often find in our garden and ones with some character: curly stems and stems of varying lengths as well as a range of colors. Conformity might be out, individuality in. Our imports are perfect, in part because growers are proud of the excellent job they do. However, 10 perfect stems in a bunch, all the exact same stem length, exact same color, the flower heads precisely all the same, can leave many designs looking the same. Cutting closer to home, cutting more garden flowers, gives us far more possibilities for expressing ourselves. We can have hops, jasmine, scented geraniums, hellebores, columbines, bearded iris, clematis and flowering branches of all kinds just to name a few.

The spread of these influences can be attributed to transportation, technology and business. Ralph Null credits big business, especially the mass marketers, with using their ingenuity to put fresh flowers easily into our hands: at checkout counters, in produce aisles. Null credits Martha Stewart with making folks comfortable with the everyday use of flowers. Before Martha and magazines, flowers were most often used for celebrations and ceremony. And, Null credits magazines with promoting the use of flowers; they will send writers and photographers around the world scouting



photo by Adam Larpson

Italy. There can be no better way to showcase the beautiful flowers grown in the Liguria region of Italy than against the backdrop of one of the strongest influences from Italy, its architecture. (1997 Philadelphia Flower Show exhibit for Liguria Region, International Trade Center, Inc.)

for inspiration so they can influence us.

Increased demand drives advancements, and specialists are more and more economically motivated to grow new flowers, develop new colors, fragrances and sizes and, to grow greater amounts of them. It is also the impetus for small distant countries to ship farther afield. More flowers in our lives sounds great to me.

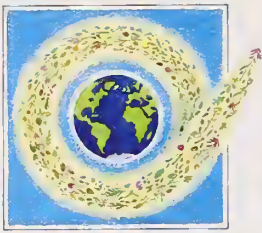
Those who will make the biggest difference in our designs will be the individual designers we learn from, usually those out there breaking all the rules. My favorite flower mentors have been my friend Deborah Wolfe, a Washington, D.C., designer and the late Herb Plankinton whose guiding principle was: Be bold. I have also been influenced and inspired by greats like Ronaldo Mia and the Madder-

lake proprietors in New York. My hands-down favorite will always be a colorist from England, Tricia Guild. These are the people who seek to be influenced, who will stretch and reach for ideas, seemingly plucking them from thin air, wrestling with them and making something so grand we'll be unable to resist their influence.


Cheryl Lee Monroe, a frequent contributor to *Green Scene*, is a horticulturist who loves flowers foremost and adds floral design to her resume. She lives and gardens in Myersville, Maryland.

**Special thanks to Ralph Null**, retired professor of floral design at Mississippi State University for his time and invaluable perspective.





# EAST MEETS WEST *Asian*

 by Terry J. Mushovic

I grew up in southern Ohio in the 1950s where the melting pot had been left on too long. Economic and racial differences were apparent growing up, but the richness of cultural heritage was lost to the dream of suburbia. When I moved to Philadelphia in 1970, I was thrilled by all the restaurants and neighborhood stores featuring foods and items from around the world. I have always loved to travel, and here I could explore different worlds with a short bus ride.

Chinatown at 10th & Race Streets was my first introduction to the Asian population in Philadelphia. I could wander the streets of Chinatown and feel I was in Asia. At that time, there was a community garden at 10th & Vine Streets that Philadelphians saw as they made their way across town. It was common to see Chinese women working in the garden as you drove by. Sadly this garden was lost to development. Numerous other gardens have sprouted up over the last 20 years as more and more Asian immigrants have moved to Philadelphia. Since the 1970 census, the number of Philadelphians of Asian descent is two and a half times greater.

As a member of the Penn State Urban Gardening Program staff since its beginning in 1977, I have had an opportunity to work with a number of Asian gardeners. My first experience was with a group of gardeners in the Logan section of the city near Broad & Lindley Streets. I was contacted by a Vietnamese social worker who wanted to start a community garden for recent immigrants from Southeast Asia. She volunteered to translate my gardening workshops. As we started that day, I looked out at about a half dozen men who politely stared back at me with absolutely no expression on their faces. As I pulled out gardening tools and information their eyes lit up. I took a deep breath and began. To my amazement, my translator repeated in English everything I said. The men would stare at me but when she repeated everything again in English they seemed to understand her. When the class concluded she explained, "They can't understand your accent." The men were from different countries in Asia, and she couldn't translate in all languages.

By the time we were ready to move outside to clear the vacant lot, everyone was more comfortable with one another. I finally met some of the women on the day we cleared the lot.



photos by Ira Beckoff

A Korean gardener harvests hot peppers for this year's batch of Kimchee.



# Gardening in Philadelphia Community Gardens



Penn State Urban Gardening Program director Terry Mushovic explains clubroot problem on the Chinese cabbage to Korean gardeners.

Apprehensive and quiet, they respectfully waited for me to take the lead. Once we got started clearing old debris and dead plants, I could see them relax. They cut away the old stalks of weeds and seedlings and then we got to the thicker plants. A petite morning quietly took a machete from her plastic shopping bag and proceeded to cut away at the woodier stalks. It was my first look at a machete, and it was a sight I have not forgotten. We finished our work in no time and my translator explained that most of the men and women came from farming backgrounds in Cambodia and were used to clearing wooded hillsides.

On planting day, I brought the usual supplies of seeds and tools to be shared. The Asian gardeners were unfamiliar with the vegetable names so I had brought along colorful seed catalogs to help them recognize the vegetables. It was wonderful to see the gardeners' faces light up when they understood what I was trying to tell them. Many of the gardeners had little cloth pouches filled with seeds they had brought with them from their homelands. They planted in the wide rows I was beginning to associate with Asian gardens. We did not have enough trowels and cultivators for everyone, but women had found sticks to use in place of trowels. They were at peace

with the land, and the unfamiliarity of being far from home had left for a moment. This garden no longer exists, but for a while it was a green haven for these gardeners.

## A Korean community garden

Below the elevated tracks at 64th & Market streets is a community garden where 90 Korean gardeners have been working the earth for the last 10 years. The Korean senior citizens live at the high-rise apartment building at 63rd & Walnut Streets. Most days from March until November, they walk to the garden and tend their crops. Some of the gardeners understand a few English phrases, but almost no one speaks English.

Doris Stahl of the Penn State Urban Gardening Program has visited the garden each year since it started. She introduced me to Alice Kim, a social worker at the Walnut Plaza apartments. Alice is a quiet spoken, gracious woman who spends most days helping physicians and elderly Koreans communicate. Although Alice is not a gardener, she agreed to translate for me with the gardeners. After several rained-out attempts, we gathered at the garden under threatening skies. Alice introduced me to Mr. Chung, the garden leader.

About a dozen or more of the 90 gardeners were working in their plots that morn-

ing. As I gazed at the garden against the backdrop of trees, I had a strong sense of being transported to another place.

Mr. Chung explained to me, through Alice, that Philadelphia weather is similar to Korea's, and they can grow most of the vegetables they know from home. I commented on the rose of sharon planted along the fence and was told it is the Korean national flower. My visit was during the fall, and the garden was a sea of greens. The Chinese cabbages were almost ready for harvest. There were several varieties planted next to purple-leaved mustards and bunching onions.

A surprise for me were all the sesame plants going to seed throughout the garden. The plants were 3- to 4-ft. tall with a broad base of leaves and a panicle of flowers at the top. According to Joy Larkcom in her book *Oriental Vegetables — The Complete Guide for Garden and Kitchen\**, *Sesame indicum* has white or pink flowers and the seeds can be crushed into an oil or roasted into a paste. The Korean gardeners soak the sesame leaves in spices and save the seed for next year's crop.

Another towering king of the garden at this time were soybean plants covered with hairy pods bursting with beans. Rice and soybeans is a common dish in Korean and other Asian cultures. I had grown soybeans myself years ago because they are a rich source of protein, calcium and vitamins. I found them time-consuming to shell and cook and asked how the Koreans do it. They steam them in the pods and then can easily squeeze them out of the pods later.

Several of the Korean women were harvesting hot peppers the day I visited. Hundreds of green and red peppers will be sun dried and ground up for making kimchee, a regional dish with Chinese cabbage. I remember Hawkeye Pierce on the MASH television shows talking about kimchee pots exploding in the fields of Korea if the fermentation process got out of hand.

With the widespread use of refrigeration today, most Koreans don't go through this process anymore. Mr. Kim of the Oriental Supermarket at 4737 Spruce Street remembers his family making batches in October that were buried in large clay pots

*\*Oriental Vegetables: The Complete Guide for Garden & Kitchen, Joy Larkcom, Koclansha International, Tokyo, New York, 1991. Available on loan to members at the PHS Library.*

*continued*



# EAST MEETS WEST

photo by Ira Beckoff



Onions and cabbage are two major crops in this West Philadelphia Asian garden grown in wide rows, which allows higher production in limited space.

that had a spout opening.

The earth would keep the kimchee evenly cool, and the family could take kimchee out as needed. Today you can buy package spices in stores like Mr. Kim's and make your own or buy jars of processed kimchee to try.

Not all the harvest treasures are above ground. Several gardeners pulled up 6½-in. white radishes, the Daikon radish to show me. *Raphanus sativus*, the Japanese or Daikon radish, is used in cooking, pickling,

salting and drying. Varieties can be 4 in. to 2 ft. long and 1 in. to 4 in. in diameter. In our heavy clay soils, it can be a challenge to grow root crops that don't fork and split. The Asian use of raised beds and good soil preparation are a major key to their success.

The entire acre community garden is planted in raised beds. Gardeners mound up at least 6 in. of soil and continually add organic matter into the soil. They plant in wide rows where leaves of one plant touch its neighbor when mature. This centuries'

old practice was also used in the West until the introduction of the horse-drawn plow. Raised beds were then abandoned for the ease of machinery. This technique has been encouraged in community gardens in Philadelphia because it is a great use of limited space. The more people can see the technique, the more they are willing to try it in their own garden.

Trellising gourds is another space-saving technique used by Asian gardeners. Interweaving twigs and tree branches, 6-ft.-high trellises are constructed to support the vines and gourds. Periodically the vines are tied to the trellis with colorful pieces of fabric from worn-out clothing. One gardener had tied up all her Chinese cabbage plants with strips of shocking-pink fabric.

The predominant color in the Korean garden is shades of green. There are few flowers in the area except for entire 10 ft. × 20 ft. beds of *Platycodon grandiflorus*, the Chinese bellflower or balloonflower. This perennial is a favorite of mine for its flower bud that fills like a balloon and then opens into a 2-in. purple flower with five pointed petals. Alice explained that the Korean gardeners grow it for three years and then harvest the white root, slice it and eat it raw.

## A Cambodian gardener

Not far from the Korean garden at 64th & Market, I visited with a Cambodian gardener who grows a wide variety of Asian vegetables in his small backyard garden. Chamroeun Yin, a young man who came to the Philadelphia area in 1989, supports himself by teaching and performing traditional dances from his homeland. His home is filled with his dance costumes and container plants he overwinters. Some of his family brought seeds and cuttings with them from Cambodia years ago before they knew it was against Department of Agriculture regulations. They now nurture the tender plants indoors since they have found no local sources for the seeds or plants.

I noticed his garden is not mounded. He said that in Cambodia they do mound up their beds during the rainy months (March and September) to encourage drainage. In November, December and January, however, there is no rainfall and planted areas are leveled out to take advantage of any available moisture.

Soil preparation is important to Chamroeun. He composts in a pit in the garden and adds the rich organic matter to new areas as he plants. No other fertilizers are



used in his vegetable garden except Miracle Grow for his roses and flowers.

The lattice fencing along the back of the garden is great for trellising up the vining crops. Two types of luffa are climbing the fence. *Luffa acutangula*, sometimes called Chinese okra, grows 15 ft. tall and bears 1-to 2-ft. fruit that have raised ridges lengthwise on the green fruit. They are harvested at 4 to 6 in. when they are still tender, peeled and stir fried or used in soups. *Luffa cylindrica*, the vegetable sponge, grows in a similar fashion and bears a smooth fruit that is also harvested at an early stage for eating. This luffa is more famous for the sponges made from its mature 12- to 18-in. fruit. It is left on the vine until the skin hardens and turns brown. It's then peeled, the pulp is removed and the sponge-like remains can be used for bath sponges.

Bitter melons, *Momordica charantia*, are also grown in most Southeast Asian gardens. The vines have attractive, deeply lobed leaves and dainty, fragrant yellow flowers. The 12-ft. vines need lots of water and the 4- to 8-in. fruit has smooth ridges, lined with bumpy warts. Green when young, they turn orange when fully ripe. The flesh is red when ripe and so bitter and slimy like okra that even the Southeast Asians use it sparingly. It contains quinine and brings out the flavors in foods according to Joy Larkcom.

Yard-long beans, *Vigna sesquipedalis*, or asparagus beans, are a favorite each year at the Harvest Show. Closely related to black-eyed peas, the pods grow 1 to 3 ft. long in pairs and are filled with 1/2-in. white, black or red beans. Chamroeun stir fries them with lemon grass and meats. Pods, seeds, leaves and young stems are all edible.

Dorothy Liem has gardened for the last three years at the Southwark/Queen Village Community Garden near 3rd & Christian streets in South Philadelphia. Born in China, Dorothy immigrated to the United States in 1980 after living in Cambodia and Vietnam. Her family owns the local Chinese take-out restaurant near the garden. Dorothy doesn't grow specialty items for the restaurant in her community plot, but she is growing crops she grew up with. She buys most of her seeds from the Chinese supermarket near 6th Street & Washington Avenue.

She showed me the seed packets with colorful pictures on the front and descriptions in Chinese. I visited the supermarket and saw shelves of items unknown to me. If there wasn't a picture on the wrapper, I had

no idea what it was.

One of Dorothy's garden favorites is garlic chives, *Allium tuberosum*. The attractive perennial is grown mostly for its garlic-flavored green leaves that grow 12 to 18 in. tall. The white, star-like flower is typical of the onion family members and is usable, as are all parts of the plant. Grown from seed or divisions, garlic chives can tolerate a wide range of soils and temperatures. Joy Larkcom, in her book, writes about seeing them growing everywhere in China, often in special clay pots. Mature leaves are blanched to a white or yellow color making the flavor more subtle. The Chinese believe them to have medicinal value, also.

Dorothy has luffa vines covering a hand-made wooden trellis. Yard-long beans and hot peppers are interspersed with basil herb plants. The basil is the pungent Thai variety that more gardeners are growing as they become familiar with it.

The Asian community gardens in Philadelphia are among the most productive and well cared for in the city. We have taken gardeners and supporters on garden tours to several sites, and they are always enthralled with the beautiful and unusual crops they see growing. In spite of the language barrier, gardeners are given samples to taste, seeds to start crops of their own and a friendly nod of the head. As a result we have seen typically Asian crops popping up in other gardens.

The annual PHS Harvest Show is another place Asian gardeners have been making a showing. Several of the community gardens enter prize-winning produce each year. Mrs. Marina LaPinia, a Philippino gardener whose garden on N. 6th Street was a tour favorite, was the first Asian gardener to win the Community Garden Sweepstake award for the most ribbons in the medium garden category. She was the first to enter such items as hyacinth beans, malabar spinach and bitter melons. Now we see entries of these vegetables from numerous gardens. Last year we even needed to subdivide a class because we had so many hyacinth bean entries.

One of my favorite classes at the Harvest Show is "Any other vegetable." Here you'll see one-of-a-kind vegetables that don't fit into the other classes. Many of them are Asian vegetables. It's worth checking out when you're at the Show. (See box.)

In 20 years of working with the Penn State Urban Gardening Program, I have worked with a lot of gardeners and seen their gardens. I have learned from each of

them and feel privileged to have had the opportunity. The Asian gardens are the ones I'm most awed by — the raised beds, the wide rows of immaculately tended plants and the trellises of simple natural woods. There is a simplicity and beauty that speaks to my gardenig spirit.

### Seed Sources

Bountiful Gardens  
5798 Ridgewood Road  
Willits, CA 95490

Burpee Seeds  
300 Park Avenue  
Warminster, PA 18991-0001

The Cooks Garden  
P.O. Box 535  
Londonderry, VT 05148

Kitazawa Seed Co.  
111 Chapman St.  
San Jose, CA 95126

Nichols Herb and Rare Seeds  
1190 N. Pacific Highway  
Albany, OR 97321-4580

Seeds Blum  
HC33 Idaho City Stage  
Boise, ID 83706

### The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's 1997 HARVEST SHOW *Renaissance Harvest*

in cooperation with  
Philadelphia Area Judges Council  
District I, Garden Club Federation  
of Pennsylvania

Urban Garden Program  
Penn State Cooperative Extension  
at the

Horticulture Center  
Fairmount Park, Philadelphia, PA

Saturday, September 13  
Sunday, September 14  
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Terry Mushovic has worked with the Penn State Urban Gardening Program since it started in 1977. She has been the director of the program since 1987. In her free time, she gardens in her small backyard flower garden in Mount Airy and plans trips to new and different places.





# Culture & Horticulture

## Cultural Influences in Community Gardens



by Sally McCabe

photos by Ira Beckoff



Norris Square works through its gardens, activities and murals to preserve the community's Hispanic culture, especially for the children.

One of the most intriguing things about Philadelphia's community gardens is that almost everybody comes from somewhere else. And many had been subsistence farmers before emigrating from Korea, Cambodia, Sicily, Puerto Rico and South Carolina. They all moved to the city, and worked hard to melt into the pot. And in their gardens they've kept up a part of the connection to the past and to their other, rural, way of life. No matter how bad things get in the neighborhood or in the job market, the gardens provide an arena where new Americans, able to get only minimum wage jobs because of language barriers, can have pride in their accomplishments. Here they can hold their heads up in front of their children, passing on pieces of their culture along with the horticulture.

Usually it's not planting information they need to get started; more often the need is for land, supplies, water, and other resources. Many folk have brought seeds with them from their native lands, but need to find similar varieties that will survive in our climate. For years Hispanic gardeners in East Philadelphia tried to grow pigeon peas (*Cajanus cajan gandules*), a favorite from Puerto Rico. They got plenty of leaves, but no peas. Penn State's Urban Gardening Program staff contacted the United States Agency for International Development, who sent not only short-season pigeon peas, but also calabaza squash and white-striped eggplants that do well in our temperate climate. Descendants of these plants have spread all over the city in the last 15-odd years since then.

Nowhere is the exchange of ideas more evident than in the many Philadelphia community gardens. On some of the larger sites, where 50 people or more might be found sharing space, it's not unusual to see plants and techniques, introduced by new gardeners one year, become the standard by the next year.

Each wave of immigration to Philadelphia has brought unique and special plants and planting styles. People from the South who arrived in the '40s and '50s brought collard greens, okra, sweet potatoes, and enough space between rows to fit a mule and a plow. More recently, Chinese and Koreans brought trellises and new gourds, herbs, peppers and greens. From Puerto





Mildred Peterkin and a friend enjoy the shade at Sun Circle community garden, where gardeners share responsibility for and pride in their accomplishments. The mini-park at 17th & Westmoreland was a local eyesore until neighbors cleared the trash and planted trees, flowers, a lawn, and several small individually maintained vegetable plots.

Rico came gandules (pigeon peas) and casitas (little houses built on garden plots). From Cambodia and Laos the Hmong farmers brought us wide rows and interplanting of crops. And let's not forget the "born again" gardeners, who learned wide-row planting not from their parents, but from the many gardening books available to anyone with a few dollars or a library card.

My family came to this country over the course of the last 150 years, brought here by the potato famine, by the Wars, and by the belief that the streets of America were paved with gold. The first thing all of them did, as quickly as possible, was to get rid of the old ways. Language, culture, behavior were assimilated, all traces of their heritage gone from the next generation. The only things my father remembers from his grandmother, on the Slovak side, are kohlrabi and homemade sauerkraut with green apples in it. From my mother's mother, on the German side, I remember the smell of chrysanthemums, especially feverfew, and the countless tulips and roses, my grandmother's namesake. But when I tried to pump Nanny about the old ways, things she had learned to grow from *her* mother, her usual reply would be "Jack Eden says you should do it *this* way . . ." The melting pot had been composting a little too long.

So I had to learn to garden on my own, the progeny of a generation who ate out of cans, and thought that salads were white lettuce with Miracle Whip. I discovered that, like my grandmother I liked to garden, so I studied Horticulture at Penn State. I arrived in Philadelphia in 1976 with a degree and little practical knowledge, to a job with Penn State's Urban Community Gardening Program. With my immigration to Philadelphia my education began in earnest.

### ***The Garden of Adam & Eve, God Bless America***

My first assignment was The Garden of Adam & Eve, God Bless America, a community garden located at 22nd & Montrose in South Philadelphia. The dozen men and one woman who started the garden were from the South — Georgia, North and South Carolina — where most had grown up on small farms, coming north to the

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***When I tried to pump Nanny about the old ways, things she had learned to grow from her mother, her usual reply would be "Jack Eden says you should do it this way . . ." The melting pot had been composting a little too long.***

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cities for work in the '40s and '50s. Their garden styles were all very similar: slightly raised straight single rows, with enough room between for a mule to pull a plow. Weeds were hoed out, and the ground kept bare; watering was done daily, from above. Organic matter was unheard of, but mushroom compost called "topsoil," delivered yearly compliments of Penn State, would disappear overnight. The crops they grew varied little from most other urban gardens in the '70s: tomatoes, hot chili peppers, cherry peppers, sweet bell peppers, bush beans, and cabbage. Then there were the standards they had brought with them from the South: collards, mustard, rape, turnip greens, yams and okra.

My job was to "teach" these fish how to swim. About the only real gardening impact I had over my 10 years with them was to get them into the City Gardens Contest, where they won many prizes, and were introduced to other gardens. Their most notable competition in the contest was the Chinatown Community Garden, then at

10th & Race (now the Vine Street Expressway), where the Chinese immigrants grew everything interplanted closely in wide raised beds, and trellised on tree branches, bamboo, and recycled lath. Over the next few years I found myself, and the A&E folks, gradually widening our rows and planting them closer together, growing different kinds of greens from other gardens, and trellising with lath.

From them I learned how peanuts grow, and how to start sweet potato slips. But to this day they have a hard time adding any organic matter other than horse manure.

### ***Common Ground: an Old-World garden***

At about the same time a totally different kind of garden was starting near the Philadelphia Airport. Modeled after the allotment gardens of Europe, Common Ground was started more than 20 years ago by the City's Redevelopment Authority on 11 acres of land, condemned for an urban renewal that never happened. The "renewal" that did take place was of another kind, and enabled people from all over the city to grow the vegetables that meant the most to them in their many different regions and countries of origin. Gardeners grow collards and okra from the South; Habanero peppers from Puerto Rico; Sicilian eggplants, Italian eggplants, yuppie eggplants; Thai herbs and greens, espaliered fruit trees, green manure cover crops; squash and pumpkins from China, Viet Nam, Laos, Cambodia. Plants are interplanted, in drill rows, in wide raised beds, up trellises, and along fence lines, blurring the lines between plots and between cultures.

Walk through Common Ground and you feel as though you've wandered into a horticultural United Nations. Every turn reveals a new ethnic delicacy — 15 different eggplants, from huge gleaming black to egg-sized whites; with pink stripes, green stripes, white stripes, no stripes; short and fat, long and thin; in bunches like little fingers, tiny bambinos the size of cherries. And the peppers! Every country in the world must have its own special pepper! Then there's the stuff I can only guess at — sesame maybe? and why is that person growing wide beds of what can only be balloon flowers? Bitter melons, fuzzy gourds, beans long enough to write home about. Lay three of them end to end in the





Sal moved to Philadelphia from Sicily in the '60s. He is most proud of his many different eggplants and tomatoes, which he preserves for winter eating. On his plot at Common Ground near Philadelphia International Airport he has built a greenhouse to start seeds and extend the growing season.

road and you'll practically BE home! No need to spell out what I learned from *these* gardeners.

## Community gardening in other countries

Very few countries are without some sort of urban agriculture. Many nations, from Europe to Japan to Canada to the Caribbean, have had "allotment gardens" (jardin ouvrier, volkstuin, Kleingarten, Las Parcelas, huertos populares) for more than 100 years, often continuously on the same ground.

Abroad, in most cases, a city develops an area for the gardens, and provides a water line to each plot, installs the paths, puts up a fence, and builds a common house for meetings and community events. Here's how a friend of mine describes the community gardens he visited while living in Vienna: "Here in 300 or so square meters the tenants distill the elements of more spacious suburban lots: lawn, vegetable and flower garden, dwarf fruit trees, shade trees and ornamentals. A house of appropriately small dimensions sits at the end of each yard. Together with the trees and fences, the house suggests permanence."

The houses (called *casitas* in Puerto Rico) are a combination tool shed and shelter, and are often occupied overnight on summer evenings. Tenants pay a nominal rent for the plot and associated amenities. Tenure is through long-term lease,

which may be inherited by spouse or children, so turnover is very slow. Most gardens set up an association to formulate and enforce rules. Many also send representatives to local, state and national garden groups, and are noted for their ability to politically mobilize members and influence government policy.

In 1995 there are an estimated 26,600 Parcelas throughout the 43 urban districts of Havana, in response to ongoing food shortages. And, *mirabile visu*, a brochure from the Office International du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux appeared on my desk recently, listing community and allotment garden associations for most of the European countries. Slovakia, where my father's memories of kohlrabi came from, lists 127,642 members in 2,413 local associations.

## The French connection

Although there are few actual French gardeners in Philadelphia, the country of France has had an extreme effect on community gardens here. Before the turn of the century a very specific system for growing food evolved called the "Biodynamic French Intensive" method, which entailed double-digging the soil, adding copious amounts of organic matter, and growing plants in wide rows, spacing the plants so that they serve as a living mulch, shading the ground to prevent evaporation of soil water and shading out emerging weeds. Although the

French are given credit, it seems an awfully lot like what most of the Asian gardeners have been doing, apparently for hundreds of years. But no matter who earns the points, the basic system works like a charm in small urban plots, and has been adopted wholeheartedly by most upwardly mobile gardeners around the city and around the nation.

## The next generation

As each group of new Americans begins to be assimilated into the melting pot, a new generation emerges, one that's not so eager to preserve the old ways. One degree removed from an agrarian society, it's easy to see the gardens as something that belongs to the "old timers," to be rejected in favor of the designer sneakers and packaged foods that first-generation immigrants could ill afford. It's a rare but welcome sight to see two or even three generations coexisting peacefully in a garden.

What I have seen, however, is the return of the third generation to the soil, growing food. Where the children of immigrants need to reject the old ways to survive in a new culture, *their* children have to reject

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***American community gardening is a celebration of cultural diversity; everybody comes from somewhere else. Everybody uses inherited ways of planting, and particular tools and techniques, even if they learned them from books rather than grandparents.***

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*their* parents' packaged food culture, and are free to return to the land. Now a new generation of food gardeners arrives, often personified in what's known in community gardening talk as "yuppie" gardeners. Like myself, they taught themselves to garden, borrowing ideas and techniques from many cultures along the way. As for myself, I subscribe to the school of "double-dig/no-till space-intensive wide-row organic-matter-heavy-with overtones of Crockett" gardening. I still, however, plant my tomatoes and collards in rows wide enough for a mule and a plow. My children will garden if forced, but since they're only 6 and 9, I'll reserve judgment.

## A peculiarly American synthesis

When generation two *does* decide to



garden, the sites take on a much different kind of look. Where new immigrants were growing food as if their lives depended on it, the group that follows them uses the garden more as a gathering place, a source of community pride in an often blighted neighborhood. These gardens are no less valuable to or valued by the community. Our newest trend in the vacant lot reclamation garden project has to be the development of a community garden that is not individual plots, but communally maintained. The supporters may each care for a separate section (but these are not delineated to the public) or the caretakers just raise money together in order to hire someone else to maintain the space. Over the last 10 years PHS's Philadelphia Green staff has realized we needed to clearly define this broader definition of community gardens and not just think of them as individual plot areas. For our project the definition is: "community gardens are community spaces that are jointly cultivated and cared for; these spaces may consist of individually worked plots, multiple person caretaker areas, sitting areas, and small-scale children's play areas."

### ***When you don't speak their language — the new neighbors***

Ines Acosta Nelson teaches English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) at Lea Elementary School at 47th & Spruce in West Philadelphia. This year her class has 22 children, mainly from Southeast Asia and Africa, who speak 17 different languages and dialects. One of her approaches is to teach these students from such diverse backgrounds a universal language — gardening. She finds that their natural defense, heightened by the stress of new situations, is much lower when there are plants around. Everyone has special foods and flowers



Wattle fencing and trellises, woven by gardeners at the Seedy Acres community garden in North Philadelphia, show an American interpretation of a very old British skill.

indigenous to their native cultures, and she finds their names in English.

This year her students visited the Philadelphia Flower Show and saw many new kinds of plants, as well as some familiar ones from their homelands. They have also traveled to several community gardens around the city, to broaden their view of their new home country through familiar practices, growing food. The class practices some of its own horticulture and won ribbons at the Junior Flower Show, where they exhibited English lavender they had grown under lights in their classroom.

### ***Suggestions for cross-cultural coping***

- Body ("human") language is VERY important. Smile a lot, and mean it.
- Pictures, and pointing at the object while speaking can be helpful. Carrying around seed packets with pictures, or illustrated seed catalogs, in the garden helps a LOT.
- Find the kids. They have a remarkable capacity for learning language quickly and can serve as translators for their elders. Bring bribes, since children's attention span is usually shorter than is needed for establishing a meaningful dialogue.

### **Resources**

Office International du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux a.s.b.l. an international organization of allotment and leisure gardening groups, can be reached through the American Community Gardening Association, 100 N. 20th Street, 5th floor, Philadelphia, PA 19103-1495, 215-988-8785. <http://ag.arizona.edu/~bradley/acga/acga.htm> [sallymcc@libertynet.org](mailto:sallymcc@libertynet.org)

*Tomatoes, Potatoes, Peppers, Beans & Greens — Different Vegetables, Different Cultures*, Penn State Urban Gardening Program, 4601 Market Street, 2nd floor, Philadelphia, PA 19139, 215-471-2224. \$10. A book about how gardeners from different ethnic backgrounds choose varieties, plant, cultivate, harvest and prepare five common vegetables.

- Make an attempt to learn at least a few of their native words. Besides basic greetings, learn some of their plant names to show that you are interested in plants and gardening.
- Use translation services whenever they're available, both for spoken translation and for written material. It's often a good idea for someone to explain back what they think the written stuff means. This helps to avoid misunderstandings like the classic "the wine was good but the meat was bad" for "the spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak."
- From Seattle we got this suggestion: Post a map of the garden site, along with photos and names of gardeners. (Do this in a private place where it's not available to the world outside the garden.)
- Again, remember that body language and smiles are ESSENTIAL to communication.

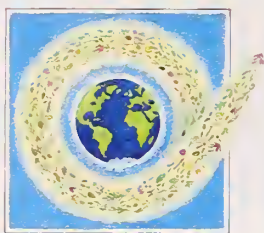
### ***Summary***

Gardening in the city is a very different animal. In the country, growing food is a way of life. Gardening provides a continuity with the past, and, through the kids, a link to the future. For so many rural people who have ended up in the city, their former lives, while poor, had a dignity, which is hard to find in the city.

American community gardening is a celebration of cultural diversity; everybody comes from somewhere else. Everybody uses inherited ways of planting, and particular tools and techniques, even if they learned them from books rather than grandparents. And sometimes with differences come cross-cultural conflicts, suspicions and outright battles. Still, there's hope that the woman who brought her hoe with her when she was air-lifted from war-torn Laos, the young professional worrying about pesticides on food, and the man from South Carolina who plants cotton in his plots lest his children forget their roots, can see that they have a tremendous amount in common.

Sally McCabe has been working with community gardens in Philadelphia for the last 20 years, first with Penn State's Urban Gardening Program, then with PHS's Philadelphia Green. She coordinates a community garden in her own neighborhood and still has a lot to learn from other gardeners.





# Garden Tools

by Fred Ballard

Humans and tools have been associated since before the dawn of history. Indeed, the use of tools is one of the things that differentiates us from other animals. Over the years, tools have been fashioned from many materials: stone, bone, wood, horn, bronze, iron and its cousin, steel. Inasmuch as our tools are made of iron and steel, that group is an appropriate one for us to think about.

Let's begin with tools made of iron, specifically wrought iron. That is, low-carbon iron, which a smith shapes by heating and hammering, a process known as forging. Cyril Stanley Smith, in his collection of essays titled *A Search for Structure*, says that wrought iron has provided most of the useful and many of the most beautiful objects of metal since the end of the second millennium B.C. Explaining the word "beautiful," he says:

... there are few works in which aesthetics and the properties of metal are more naturally combined than in the best wrought iron of almost any period. The flow of metal under the hammer and the necessity of working fast while the metal is hot and in contact with the anvil, swage or fuller confer grace to every change of section."

Smith is right; tools can be beautiful as well as useful. The 18th century trowels shown in Figure 1 (from *Garden Tools*, published by Abbeville Press) are a case in point. To my eyes they resemble primitive art.

The earliest picture I have found that shows the characteristic appearance of hand-forged wrought iron tools is Figure 2, from *An Illustrated History of Gardening* by Anthony Huxley. The tools in Figure 2 are Roman, made in the 8th or 9th century. Figure 3, from *Garden Tools*, shows similar European tools manufactured about a thousand years later. Between Figures 2 and 3 lie ten centuries of almost imperceptible technological evolution before the industrial revolution. Fernand Braudel, writing about this period in his text *The Structures of Everyday Life*, tells us that:



Author Fred Ballard demonstrates how to use the Japanese concave cutter. (See box on page 39.)

In a way, everything is technology: not only man's most strenuous endeavours but also his patient and monotonous efforts to make a mark and those innumerable actions [that] may have no immediate innovating significance but which are the fruit of accumulated knowledge: the sailor rigging his boat, the miner digging a gallery, the peasant behind the plough or the smith at the anvil. . . . Technology ultimately covers as wide a field as history and has, of necessity, history's slowness and ambiguities.

After the industrial revolution, the pace

of technological evolution increased dramatically. A painstaking history of tools covering both the pre- and the post-industrial periods is set forth in a series of articles in *The Garden, Journal of The Royal Horticultural Society*, from January 1995 to November 1996\* written by Brent Elliott, Ph.D., RHS librarian and archivist. Before the industrial revolution Dr. Elliott's history shows only incremental changes occurring. After the revolution there are quantum leaps, tools with no pre-industrial ancestors. Examples: lawn mowers (reel and rotary), engineered lopping shears

\*See box "Reading About Tools"

photo by Ira Beckoff





Figure 1: 18th century trowels.

Photo by Marc Schwartz from 1996 Garden Tools by Suzanne Slesin, Guillaume Pellerin, Stafford, Daniel Rozensztroch, Bernard Touillon and Alix de Dives, Abbeville Press, N.Y.

An Illustrated History of Gardening by Anthony Huxley, Paddington Press (published in association with the Royal Horticultural Society), N.Y., 1978.



Figure 2: Models of 8th or 9th century Roman tools found in a tomb on the Rhine.

ABOVE AND LEFT: Models of tools found in a tomb on the Rhine. They were mainly agricultural plough, winnowing dish and left) — but many, like the adze, sickle and fork (above) also have been used in garden.



Figure 3: European tools manufactured 1,000 years later than those in Figure 1 above.

(ratchet and compound), and, of course, power tools (gasoline and electric).

The industrial revolution also brought major changes in the appearance of tools. Figures 4, 5, & 6, from the current Kinsman wholesale catalog of fine garden tools, shows some of them. The blades of the "specialized trowels" in Fig. 4 are made of hot-rolled steel rather than hand-wrought iron, eliminating the aesthetic quality admired by Cyril Smith. The items shown in Fig. 5 are made of cast aluminum with plastic handles — producing an art deco feeling. The hand fork and trowel in Fig. 6 are made of "mirror polished" stainless

steel, suggesting a Brancusi sculpture rather than a shaman's totem.

Turning from appearances to practicalities, how are the modern tools shown here sold? In my neighborhood I find two types of retail outlets — boutiques, offering elegant tools and garden marts and hardware stores, offering more utilitarian wares. Mail order catalogs follow the same pattern, Smith and Hawkins or Walt Nicke corresponding to a boutique, A.M. Leonard or Gardener's Supply to a garden mart.

Boutiques make much of the fact that their brands are designed and manufactured in England, France, Sweden, Holland,

Germany and Switzerland — countries that were renowned for the quality of their tools (and weapons) before the industrial revolution. There is even one item that combines the appeal of two of these countries, being described as "design and quality Swedish, made in France."

In contrast, garden marts may offer one or two European brands at the top of their line, but the bulk of their stock will be of unspecified design, manufactured in "the USA" or in one of the emerging industrial countries: Taiwan, Korea, China, Indonesia. A few new catch phrases appear: "Made in Maine," "made in Australia," "endorsed by



# Garden Tools



Figure 4: Specialized trowels made from hot rolled steel.



Figure 5: Hand fork and trowels made from cast aluminum with plastic handles.



Figure 6: Hand fork and trowel made of Wilkinson Stainless Steel.

the Sierra Club.”

Changing the subject again, none of the texts cited in this article mentions China or Japan. Why? Because the settlers of North America came from Europe, and the garden tools they brought with them were products of European culture. There were no Asian farmers along the East coast of North America, and the commercial connections with Asia — the sailing ships of the Canton tea trade — were devoted to more profitable cargoes than unfamiliar gardening equipment.

***Authorities generally agree that the modern American version of the long-handled, round point shovel is uniquely well designed and manufactured. It has been said to be one of the three essential tools to have with you on a desert island.***

Today the picture is changing, reflecting the expansion of trade and travel across the Pacific. A number of garden marts are carrying a cultivator billed as an “all purpose [Asian] garden tool,” a “Korean weeder/cultivator,” or an “heirloom Korean hand hoe.” A mail order catalog shows two versions of this item (long-handled and hand-held) indexed under the heading “Asian Tools.” In addition, boutiques have begun to respond to the growing interest in bonsai by offering Japanese bonsai tools, and at least one of these — a concave cutter that can substitute for pruning shears — is beginning to be used for general gardening (see box).

What about American tools? Do any of them fall outside the European tradition? Tool making in America got off to a slow start. Through the 17th and early 18th centuries, while the colonists were setting up furnaces and forges from scratch, they relied on tools made mostly of wood — a technology with no modern descendants. Then in 1750, when the colonists’ factories were beginning to compete with the mother country’s, the English parliament passed a law forbidding Americans to set up mills for producing finished iron products — locking the door after the horse was stolen, but still putting a damper on tool production. After the Revolutionary War, Ameri-

can industry produced at least one distinctive tool — the long-handled, round point shovel. To be sure, there were European ancestors; but authorities generally agree that the modern American version is uniquely well designed and manufactured. It has been said to be one of the three essential tools to have with you on a desert island.

What about the future? We can visualize laser cutters and silent cordless electric tools (there already is a cordless electric mower) controlled by computer, which in turn is controlled by E-mail instructions. But it’s hard to foresee the return of beautiful hand-forged trowels like those in Figure 1.

## Reading About Tools

- \*\* *The Garden*, Journal of the Royal Horticultural Society. 1995: Jan., March, May, Sept., Nov.; 1996: March, May, July, Sept., Nov.
- \* *Garden Tools*, Suzanne Slesin, Guillaume Pellerin, Stafford Cliff, Daniel Rozensztroch, Bernard Touillon, Alex De Dives, Abbeville Press, New York, 1996.
- \* *An Illustrated History of Gardening*, Anthony Huxley, Paddington Press LTD, New York & London, 1978.
- \* Available on loan to members through the PHS Library
- \*\* Available for use in the PHS Library

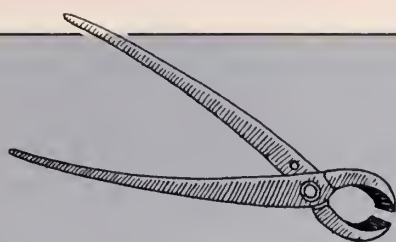
I am indebted to Mary Lou Wolfe for most of the research on which this article is based, and to Jonathan Bowman for information about the market for garden tools.

—Fred Ballard

Fred Ballard has been growing bonsai for more than 30 years. He was a charter member of the Pennsylvania Bonsai Society and served as president of the National Bonsai Foundation from 1987 to 1996. Fred and Ernesta take meticulous care of a distinguished 1920’s garden at their house in Chestnut Hill.



## TOOLS FROM AFAR



### The Japanese Concave Cutter

Fred Ballard

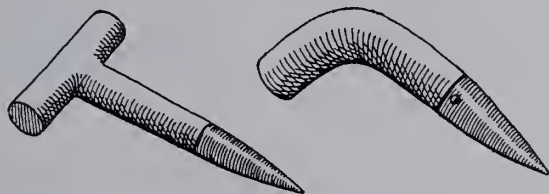
The look and feel of Japanese bonsai tools reminds us that Japanese swords have been called the supreme metallurgical art; that Japanese design is the epitome of simplicity; and that bonsai technique depends on precision. The concave cutter, advertised as "the single most important tool for bonsai use and for which there is no substitute," has all these attributes. I routinely put an eight-inch version in my pocket before going to work in the garden.

In design, the Japanese concave cutter is fundamentally different from our pruning shears. Our shears are like scissors; the blades cross one another. When you prune a branch from a stem, there is always one blade between the cut in the branch and the side of the stem, leaving a stub as long as the width of that blade. Also, like scissors, our shears work better when held at right angles to the branch. In contrast, the Japanese design brings two sharp blades together, edge to edge, somewhat like a clamshell dredge. The cut is flush with the stem, leaving no stub. Additionally, the cutting edges are at a 45-degree angle; so the tool cuts effectively with the handles almost parallel to the branch rather than across it.

The advantages of a concave cutter: It eliminates stubs and minimizes scarring. And, because of the angle between the blades and the handles, it is easier to make cuts in the interior of good size shrubs; you don't have to position the tool across the branch. Also, by making a series of shallow cuts to form and enlarge a "v" (like a beaver gnawing through a tree), you can cut a branch that would be too thick for conventional shears.

Disadvantages: The efficacy of the tool depends on sharp blades held precisely in position by a close-fitting pivot. Since garden use involves heavier cuts than bonsai use, putting more strain on blades and pivot and necessitating more frequent sharpening, my advice would be, don't buy a concave cutter unless you are good at sharpening, and if you do buy, buy a good one.

Concave cutters are sold at bonsai nurseries such as Rosade Bonsai Studio (6912 Ely Road, New Hope, PA 18938, 215-862-5925); at garden boutiques such as Yard Company (8430 Germantown Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19118, 215-247-3390); and garden marts such as Primex (435 W. Glenside Ave., Glenside, PA 19038, 215-887-7500) or Waterloo Gardens (136 Lancaster Ave., Devon, PA 19333, 610-293-0800).



Dibber

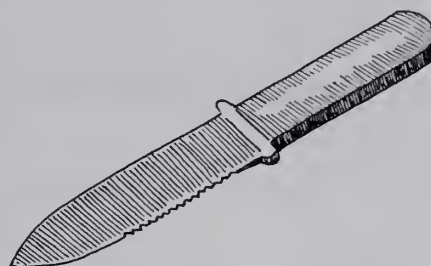
Lauri Brunton

Jack Blandy, owner of Stoney Bank Nurseries in Glen Mills, Pennsylvania, uses the dibber, which originated in England, for a quick planting of small bulbs in prepared soil, transplants, and

placing small seedlings into a garden bed where little impressions or holes are needed.

If you want to get fertilizer a little deeper into the soil than broadcast spreading, something like osmocote or slow-release fertilizers, the dibber can pinch holes around the plant to receive fertilizers. Blandy also uses it to break up potbound plants and to play tic tac toe at lunch time.

Blandy says the shape of handle, a t-grip, keeps his hand from getting fatigued. The dibber, also known as the dibble, comes in a variety of sizes and usually costs around \$10. Blandy purchased his from Kinsman Co., Inc. (River Road, Point Pleasant, PA 18950-0357, Phone: 215-297-0890, Fax: 215-297-0450). Lauri Brunton is PHS Publications associate



### Japanese Farmer's Knife — My Favorite Garden Tool

Kathy Andersen

My Japanese farmer's knife (Smith & Hawkins, Trade Sales Dept., 117 E. Strawberry Drive, Mill Valley, CA 94941, 415-389-8300) or soil knife (A.M. Leonard, 241 Fox Drive, P.O. Box 86, Piqua, OH 45356, 1-800-543-8955) is the most versatile of all my garden tools. I refer to it as my "Japanese Assault Knife" because it looks like a commando knife, and I think that I could use it for protection if necessary. It is absolutely unbendable and indestructible. The heavy black steel blade is about 6-in. long with a sturdy cutting knife edge on one side and a serrated blade for sawing through roots on the other. Only the wooden handle protrudes from the sheath when I buckle it on my belt. The overall length is just under a foot.

I have several of these knives. One stays (in its sheath) under the passenger seat of my car along with a large box of baggies. Should I spot something along the road that I feel compelled to "rescue," I can fasten the sheath on my belt and quickly and effectively carve the plant out of the thickest, rockiest sod, place it in a plastic bag and be on my way. Even the finest "alpine trowels" bend under much resistance from heavy sod.

Another is kept with weeding and general hand tools in the garage. It can readily carve a really nasty weed from the garden or lawn in no time at all. The hefty blade is well adapted to prying and hammering as well as roguing out unwanted or diseased daffodil or lily bulbs without disturbing the roots of their desirable associates. A third is kept in a drawer in the kitchen, just in case I need one in a hurry and can't find the other two.

Kathryn Andersen is past president of both the American Daffodil Society and North American Lily Society. Currently, she serves as president of the National Chrysanthemum Society.



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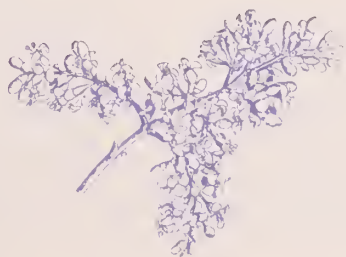
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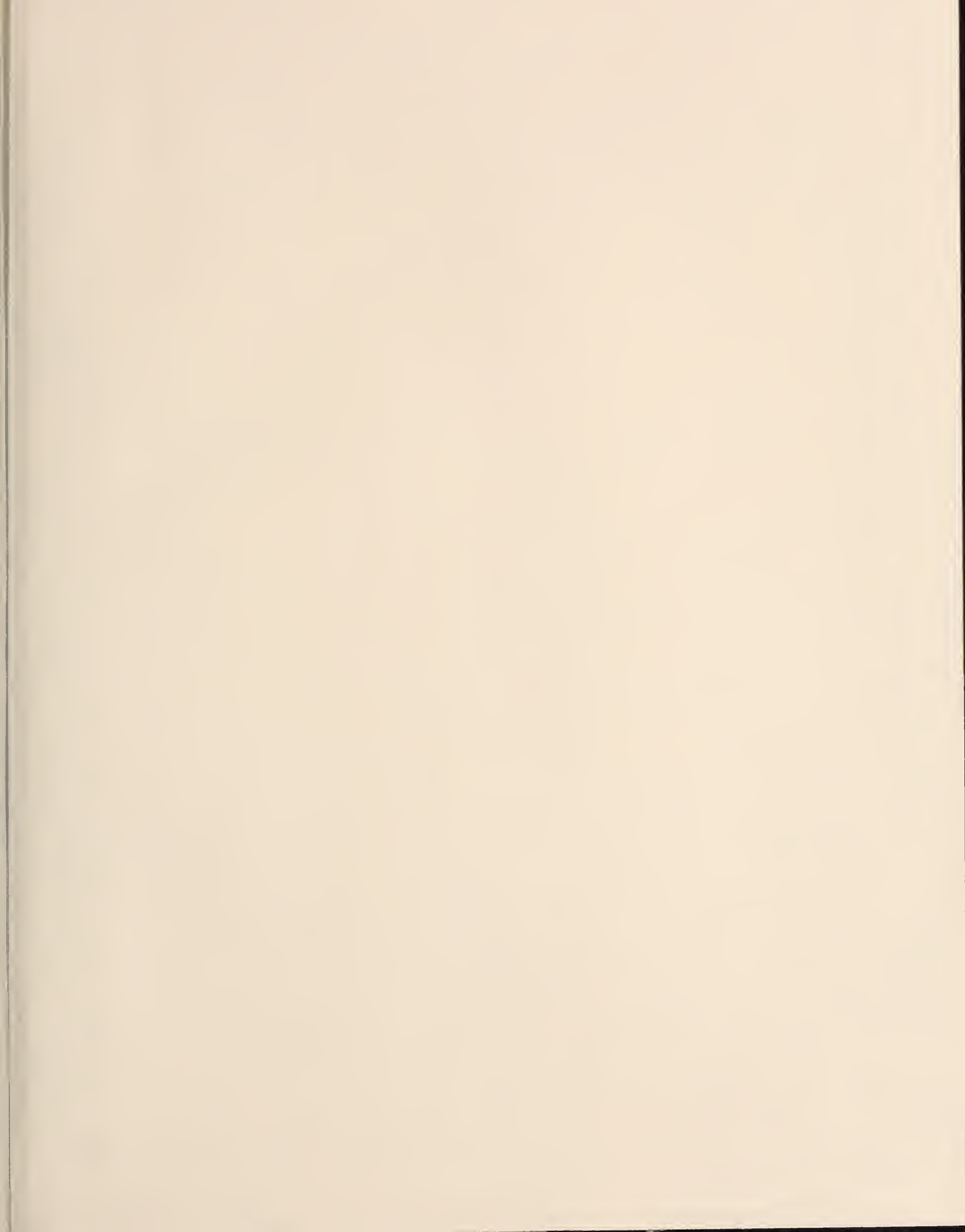


















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